

202. The Gospel of John 20:11-18

The King is Risen-Part 4

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(12-18-22)

Find this weeks' sermon audio and video message [HERE](#).

John 20:11–15 (NKJV)

¹¹ But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." ¹⁴ Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

One commentator put Mary's statement this way—

"That's a pretty strong statement for a little gal. I believe that Jesus was a good size man. Here she is saying, just tell me where you've taken Him, I'll carry Him away. I'm sure she could have because of the strength of her love. But I think that at that suggestion, Jesus probably saw some humor in it."

John 20:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

How was it that Mary didn't recognize Jesus by sight, but knew Him immediately when He spoke her name?

I mean there were many 'Marys' that followed Jesus—how was it that *this* Mary knew her Shepherd the moment He spoke her name?

Jesus gave us the answer to that question earlier in His ministry—

John 10:1–5 (NLT)

¹ "I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! ² But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice."

Apparently, Mary had turned away from Jesus (thinking He was the gardener)—but **when He spoke her name, she recognized immediately that it was Jesus—her Shepherd and King!** So, she turned back to look into the eyes of her beloved Master—and all she could say was, "Rabboni" ("my Teacher")!

"Rabbi" and "Rabboni" were equivalent terms of respect—in later years, the Jews recognized three levels of teachers: **rab** (the lowest), **rabbi**, and **rabboni** (the highest).

Jesus' response to Mary has been misunderstood by many—

John 20:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’ ”

The King James translation comes across kind of weird and somewhat mystical—“**Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father...**”

However, the Greek is better translated, “**Stop clinging to Me...**”

Jesus permitted the other women to hold His feet (Matthew 28:9), and He did not forbid them—so what is going on here?

One commentator said this—

“Why didn’t Jesus want Mary to touch Him? Actually, the ancient Greek construction of this phrase ‘means to stop an action already begun rather than to avoid starting it.’ Mary was holding on to Jesus and did not want to let Him go. Jesus was not protesting that Mary should not touch Him lest He be defiled but was admonishing her not to detain Him because He would see her and the disciples again.”

Pastor Chuck Smith—

“It’s my feeling that when Mary saw Him, she probably got a death hold grip around His neck. And sort of, ‘You got away from me once but you’re never going to get away from me again. I’ll never let You go again.’ In her excitement, in her thrill, I believe that she really just grabbed Him, clung to Him. And He said to her, ‘Don’t cling to Me, Mary, but just go to my brethren and tell them that I’m ascending to the Father, your Father, to My God and your God.’”

John 20:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* He had spoken these things to her.

The next section in John’s gospel takes place Sunday *evening*—the evening Jesus rose from the dead.

Only Luke records what took place on that Resurrection Sunday *afternoon*—which I’d like to spend the rest of our time this morning looking at devotionally.

Luke 24:13-17 (NKJV)

¹³ Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, “What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?”

So here we see two of Jesus’ disciples that found themselves in a similar place—their hearts were sad, and their spiritual passion had not only cooled—it was all but gone!

First of all, before we try to determine what the problem was that was causing them to lose their spiritual passion—let’s look at what they *hadn’t* lost. Or in other words, *what they still had* in their relationship with Jesus—

Luke 24:18-19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people..."

1. What These Two Disciples Still Had

A. They still had a fondness for Jesus—verse 19

Even though their hearts were broken, and their dreams were shattered—they still spoke of Jesus with fondness—there really wasn't any bitterness in the way they spoke of Him.

There are a lot of Christians who, when things don't go their way, or their dreams are shattered in some way they become bitter against God, even angry—but to their credit *not* these disciples.

B. They still believed in Him—verse 19

Maybe, not to the degree they had just a few days earlier—I mean they no longer believed He was the Messiah of Israel—but they still referred to Him as **"a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people"** so their faith, although damaged—was not completely destroyed.

2. What These Two Disciples Had Lost

A. They lost hold of the promises that Jesus had given to them

They had forgotten the things He had told them and the promises He had made to them—heartache will do that at times.

- a) **Three times He had told them that He was going to be crucified—but that He would rise again on the third day.**
- b) **He promised them that after He rose and ascended back to His Father that—He would return to the earth to establish a glorious Kingdom and that every eye would see Him return: *"...and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."* (Matthew 24:30)—only a resurrected Jesus could fulfill this promise!**

But it seemed they hadn't taken those promises to heart (or maybe even ignored them altogether) because they didn't fit into their preconceived ideas of what Messiah would do when He finally came—not to die but to reign over an earthly Kingdom!

It was a classic case of *'picking and choosing'* what we want to hear from God's Word while rejecting the rest.

But even when Christians do believe the promises of God, they often lose heart and forget what God has promised when things don't go the way they had expected—or on their timetable.

They immediately forget all the promises He has given to them (like these 2 disciples that day)—and in the process become totally discouraged, defeated and even depressed—forgetting: *"To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven."* (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

Listen, God's delays are not necessarily God's denials (Luke 18:1).

**B. They lost hope for the future that Jesus would save them from their present circumstances
—verses 20-21**

Luke 24:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem [save] Israel...

How black things can look when we lose hope that God is going to come through—*“He had His chance—now it’s too late!”*

Proverbs 13:12 (NKJV)

¹² Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but *when* the desire comes [when a hope is realized], *it is* a tree of life.

Or in other words, when something we are hoping for is delayed—we become emotionally sick and that will lead to depression and in extreme cases—to suicide (especially this time of year).

Webster's dictionary defines **hope** this way—*“To desire with expectation of obtainment.”*

Humanly speaking just because we hope for something doesn't mean it's guaranteed—unless it's a hope rooted in a promise of God in His Word. In the Bible **God has given His children many promises** all of which are designed to give us hope—Peter called these ***“exceedingly great and precious promises.”*** (2 Peter 1:4)

Many of these deal with everyday life, where God has promised to provide everything, we need to live physically from day to day.

Matthew 6:31-33 (NLT)

³¹ “So don't worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ ³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

God, who created us, knows how important hope is for living our lives here on earth—and how prone we are to lose it when things get tough.

That's why, in His Word, He constantly tries to encourage us not to lose hope in Him and in His promises to us—

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

Romans 15:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God wants His people to have hope because He knows it is an essential ingredient for life—He knows that when hope is gone life becomes unbearable and even impossible.

C. They lost sight of Jesus because of the circumstance—verses 15-16

Luke 24:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

Once we begin to lose our faith, our spiritual vision grows dim—and we get very ‘*near-sighted*.’ In other words, we see only the size of our problem and not the size of our God.

We can get so focused on the circumstance that we no longer see things through the eyes of faith—but only through the eyes of flesh. Like Peter walking on the Sea of Galilee who got his eyes off of Jesus and on to his circumstance and began to sink—so do we!

D. They lost their joy—verse 17

Luke 24:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ And He said to them, "What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

Some Christians are sad as they walk with Jesus—even though the Lord was walking with these 2 disciples (as He is with us)—they couldn’t see Him, their eyes were blinded by sorrow and loss and shattered dreams.

It reminds us of Mary Magdalen outside the empty tomb weeping—here the risen Christ was standing there trying to encourage her—but her eyes were blinded by sorrow, loss, and shattered dreams—just like us at times. (Explain)

E. They lost their fire—v.21

Luke 24:21 (NKJV)

²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

In other words—their spiritual passion was gone—the fire had gone out.

Jesus put it this way to the church of Ephesus in Revelation Chapter 2—“*You have left (not ‘lost’) your first love. You’re still going through the motions, but you’ve lost the emotion in your relationship with Me.*”

All of this is a picture of many in the Church today.

Many people have suffered bitter losses or disappointments—and so like the disciples on the road to Emmaus:

- *They still have a fondness for Jesus—although they speak of their relationship with Him often in the past tense (nothing much happening with the Lord in their life today).*
- *They still believe in Him—somewhat. Their faith is severely damaged but not totally destroyed.*

- *They've lost hold of the promises that God has given to them in His Word.*
- *They've lost hope that God is ever going to work and that things are ever going to change.*
- *Their spiritual vision has grown dim—they can't see the Lord is with them and still working in their lives.*
- *They've lost their joy.*
- *They've lost their passion for God.*

3. **How Did Jesus Deal with Them?**

A. **He comes to them—verse 15**

Luke 24:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ **So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.**

It seems that Jesus spent most of the afternoon with them, talking to them and teaching them— even though neither of them were of any great importance. In other words, they weren't apostles just '*ordinary*' disciples.

Yet we must understand that—Jesus is no respecter of persons; He has no '*ordinary*' disciples—we're all special to Him. He cares about you and what you're going through. (1 Peter 5:7)

He knows if you are having a crisis of faith right now—I believe He'll come to you in some way, shape, or form to encourage you—if you're looking for Him!

Maybe He'll come to you through a circumstance (like He did with Peter in the storm he was going through)—or maybe through a verse or passage in His Word during your morning devotions—or through someone you may or may not know that He comes to you when you least expect it—to encourage you and help you gain perspective again.

It'll really be Jesus coming to you but if you're not careful you may miss Him! (Mark 6:48)

B. **He reproves them for not understanding all that God had said in His Word about Messiah's Coming—verses 25-26**

Luke 24:25-26 (NKJV)

²⁵ **Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"**

What was their basic problem?

They did not believe all that the prophets had written about the Messiah.

That was the problem with most of the Jews in that day—they saw Messiah as a *conquering Savior*—but they did not see Him as a *suffering Servant*. (Isaiah 53:3)

As they read their Scriptures (our Old Testament)—they only focused on the passages that dealt with the glory but not the suffering of the Messiah.

This is the problem with too many Christians today—they want blessings but not adversity—they reject the cross but still want the crown, forgetting that crucifixion Friday proceeds resurrection Sunday—and therefore, they tend to only read those portions of Scripture that appeal to them and ignore the rest—as if the Bible was like the salad bar at Sizzlers! (Matthew 4:4)

Paul reminded us in Philippians 1:29, *“For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”*

C. He teaches them from the Word of God—verse 27

Luke 24:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Paul the Apostle admonished the Ephesian pastors in Acts 20:27—to teach their people *“the whole counsel of God”*—which is why we teach verse by verse.

- *“But I’m always studying the Word, and my heart still feels cold.”*
- Okay, maybe that’s true—but do you study it to learn about Jesus?

In other words, do you want to understand and draw close to Jesus through your study of the Word—or do you study to increase your head knowledge but not your love of Jesus? (Explain)

“He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself”. (verse 27)

Psalm 40:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book *it is written of me.*

John 5:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

Notice something else—the fire was not rekindled while they talked about Him with each other on the road—the fire was only kindled when they began spending time with Him and talking to Him and He to them through His Word! We can only really know Him by *communing* with Him—

Luke 24:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread [fellowship/communion].

4. What Was the Results in These Disciples Lives?

A. Their hearts were rekindled for God—verse 32

Luke 24:32 (NKJV)

³² And they said to one another, *“Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”*

B. They had a burning passion to tell others about the risen Lord Jesus—verses 33-34

Luke 24:33-34 (NKJV)

³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed...

CONCLUSION

Jeremiah 23:28-29 (NKJV)

²⁸ "The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream; And he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What *is* the chaff to the wheat?" says the Lord. ²⁹ "*Is* not My word like a fire?" says the Lord, "And like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces?

Once God lights a fire in our hearts we must continue to stoke and feed it every day—this is the secret of ‘burning hearts’ for God!

It starts by believing in Jesus and receiving Him into your heart by faith as your Savior which is how the fire is lit in the first place.

But then it needs to be ‘fed’ by spending time with Jesus in His Word and through prayer.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please, reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

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