

Walking with Christ

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[0 : 00] So this night I would like to talk to you about the blessings of walking with Jesus. Or maybe, or better, of Jesus walking with us.

It is not only and mainly about we walking with Jesus, but mainly about Jesus walking with us. And I really love to walk. Not only to do some physical exercises, but mainly because I love to explore new places when I walk. Or if I walk in a known place, I like to see the details, every details of that place.

Such as maybe Prince Street or the Mount or the streets of Edinburgh. That's a very known song. However, there's something better than just walking alone. And it's to enjoy all this walk, but in company. In the company of friends or family.

[1 : 14] This is because we were not created to live in isolation, but with others. To share the experience with others.

Nevertheless, the greater experience is not only walk with friends, but with the one who created these beautiful landscapes.

And also the one who created friendship and friends. With the one who is at the same time the king of the universe and our Redeemer and our very best friend.

However, we can have some information about all this and we can know all this. We can have this information in our heads, but without transformation in our hearts.

And this could be because we can culturally know about Jesus. And this is very sad, even without believing or believing Jesus.

[2 : 21] Sadly, we can be a cold hearted, sad disciple without an inner transformation of life. But this cannot be the case.

And because of this, Jesus comes to every kind of people, including, as we will see, those who know information about him.

Without an experiential knowledge of him. So briefly, I want to talk to you these three main heads or points.

The first one is talking about Jesus without knowing or recognizing Jesus. The second one is the first blessing of walking with Jesus.

That is a clear knowledge of the Scripture. It's all about Jesus. And finally, the second blessing of walking with Jesus, or mainly Jesus walking with us.

[3 : 24] And that is an experiential knowledge of the person and work of Jesus Christ. So the first point of this is talking about Jesus without recognizing Jesus or without knowing Jesus.

And that is foolishness. So this is the context. We have two disciples walking to a mouse from Jerusalem on a very special day in a unique context.

Their leader, their shepherd, was killed just three days ago. And in the road to a mouse that is like seven miles, that is like from here to the airport, they were walking about all these things that had happened.

What happened occupied their thoughts and their talking. They were not only talking about these things, but as we see in verse 15, they were discussing this.

That is, they were involved in the details and every details about what just happened three days ago. It wasn't a light conversation, a light chat about, I don't know, what's better, McDonald's or KFC or whatever.

[4 : 51] No, it was about important things. And important things or issues demand our constant attention.

On the first day of the week, on this significant Sunday in history, they were talking about someone who changed history forever.

However, these two disciples, they needed a change in their hearts. Actually, they needed burning hearts.

At that moment, Jesus enters this story. Jesus draws near and joins this conversation. But however, they did not recognize him because their eyes were kept from recognizing him. In other words, they were talking about someone who was walking now with them without discerning that the man was Jesus himself.

[6 : 02] And now we have, and we see Jesus and he asked about the things that they were discussing. And the emphasis here in the original is in the matters that they discussed.

Now, let's stop for a moment. They are going to reply to Jesus and their answer will reveal their hearts.

First, there was sadness. After Jesus, after Jesus questioned, they, as the Bible said, stood still. So they were walking, but then they stood still. They just stopped. They just stopped their walk and looking sad. There was no joy in their hearts.

The matters that they were discussing brought a burden on them. There was no joy, a burden. With sad faces, they didn't give a polite answer to Jesus.

[7 : 06] Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened there in these days?

This answer was given to the resurrected Jesus, the one who is fully man and fully God, therefore the one who knows everything perfectly.

What things, Jesus replied. And as we said, their answer reveals their hearts. First, about the knowledge of who Jesus was, past tense.

And then what happened to him and third, the report or the news of their friends. For them, first, Jesus of Nazareth was a man who was a prophet, mighty indeed and words before God and all the people.

Think about this. There's no mention of Jesus as the Son of Man or as the Son of God, but he was a prophet, not he is actually right now a prophet.

[8 : 26] He was a prophet. So let me ask you this. Who is Jesus for you? Is he only a mighty prophet as the Old Testament prophets?

Or is the only one who can save your life, therefore God himself made flesh. For them, for these disciples, he was a prophet.

That's the past. He was not longer an actual prophet, but he was a prophet. And for you, who is Jesus?

Is he your prophet? Or maybe you are considering that he was my prophet or he was my savior. And maybe you are thinking that this is your last Sunday here because you're boring or there's no sense in being Christians.

I don't know. Is Jesus for you? The reason why they talk in the past tense is because they haven't experienced yet the power of the resurrection.

[9 : 38] The reality of the resurrection, as Paul said, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, that I may know him, do you know Jesus and the power of his resurrection?

And then secondly, they talk about what happened to Jesus. They said, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death and crucify him.

His master, his leader was killed, but they didn't know yet the way of real redemption, the death of the creator and savior of the world.

For them, all this information brought sadness. However, Jesus soon will change the situation, as the psalm said, you have turned for me my mourning into dancing from burdened hearts into burning hearts.

Then they said, but we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. And from the beginning of the book, we can see that Luke describes Jesus as the Redeemer of Israel.

[10 : 59] Just in chapter one, verse 68 and 69, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant Israel.

People were talking about Jesus as the Redeemer, but their hope were decreasing. What about your hope in Christ?

It is important to stop here. A Redeemer is someone who liberates, who sets free a captured person by paying the price. And for first century Jews, the Messiah was the Redeemer, but for them was a

political Redeemer, a military Redeemer.

For many of them, there was no need for someone who pays for their sins, because they were living according to their own righteousness.

So what about us? What kind of Redeemer are we looking for? A Redeemer according to our own sometimes selfish desires, a political Redeemer, just a cultural Redeemer, someone who maybe can fulfill your desires as Santa Claus, maybe.

[12:20] What kind of Jesus are we looking for? And the image of a suffering Messiah was not in their heads.

Even for some godly believers, the hope of a Redeemer who can redeem them from their sins was just extinguishing. Someone who claimed to be the way, the truth, and the life was dead.

And that was the third day after Christ's crucifixion. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us.

And they did not find his body saying that he was alive. They were amazed by the report, but without hope.

They were amazed by this information, but without an inner transformation. With all this, and this is a strong language, Jesus tells them, all foolish ones and a slow of heart.

[13:27] To have information about Jesus, to hear a report about Jesus without recognizing Him, without understanding and embracing the gospel, is foolishness.

Jesus calls them foolish and slow of heart. And you can say, but why? Jesus is so full of grace. Why He uses this kind of language?

Why? Well, for these disciples, Jesus calls them foolish ones and slow of heart, because they didn't believe the woman's report. No.

Listen to this. Jesus calls them foolish because they were slow of heart to believe all the prophets have spoken. Foolish. Someone who shows an irrational attitude.

Foolish one because they were discussing something that in reality, they didn't believe it. Jesus told them, you are so slow in your heart, that is in the use of your reasons, of your even your affections and your will to believe, to trust and embrace what the prophets said.

[14:54] Slow of heart means literally that someone who is very slow with no attitude to embrace. It's like, oh, maybe this is so boring about the prophets, but they love to discuss about this.

But they didn't get the point of this. You are being so irrational because you are so slow to embrace the best treasure, the gospel and the Old Testament.

Are we trusting what the Scripture says? This is the point here. The gospel was in the Old Testament in the prophets, but they didn't believe it.

What is your attitude towards the Scripture? Maybe we can know about this and we can discuss about this, but have we embraced the promises, the gospel in the Old Testament, the one who is the creator of the universe saying, I am your God walking among you?

That's the most beautiful reality. But they were slow in their hearts. What about us?

[16:20] Only God knows our hearts, but are we embracing this? When is going to be the day that we are going to take all this maybe seriously and believe this, that Jesus died for our sins, our horrible sins, maybe our secret sins, that there is real freedom in Christ for you and for me, that this is something real.

This is not just a nice story. This is about life himself and God is calling us. Every day, maybe you know this and you are living this, but tomorrow we are going to struggle with our temptation, with our anxieties, whatever.

But God is saying here that this is real. And what is real is that literally Jesus loves you.

But God is here, literally here, not just in this building, but here among us. What is our response to that?

So now, next point, the first blessing now of walking with Jesus. Sorry, but before that, it's important to understand that what Jesus does here is to expose the ugliness, maybe, that's the word, yes, of their sins.

[17:57] Jesus confronts them and this is the only time where Jesus calls someone like in this way, foolish. Yes, these are hard words.

Maybe for you, you just said it hurts. But let me tell you this, this is part of God's grace. It is necessary because we are not dealing, we are not playing with toys.

But with sins, we are dealing with that. God loves you so much that he wants to show you, to show us how horrible it is to know so many things about Jesus without having a real and experiential knowledge about him.

It is like being thirsty and to know that, because I'm thirsty right now. And you know about the water, you know the chemical formula of this.

And you see the most beautiful water, but that's all for you, just water. Maybe if you are hungry and you love a good meal and you know how to prepare that.

[19 : 15] But you don't enjoy about that food. That's only a weak sample about this. So the first blessing, because this is part of God's grace, Jesus heals them and takes the burden out by showing the first blessing.

And that is a clear knowledge of Scripture that it's all about Christ. And in the beginning of the 20th century, in the beginning of the 20th century, Jesus was the first to interpret that to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself.

Jesus is so gracious that he interpreted to them the meaning of the Old Testament. Everything is about Christ, the law, the prophet, the Psalms point out to Jesus.

The center of the Old Testament is Jesus. It is not morality about how to be the better David, maybe. No, it's about how the real David, the true David, is Jesus Christ.

And it's the same for the New Testament. Therefore, it is about the gospel. It is about what God does to save his people. It is not about what we are doing to save ourselves.

[20 : 27] No, it's about what God does to save us. It's about the necessity, verse 26, that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory.

And this is very important because this is the center of the gospel. It was necessary for the Messiah to suffer for their redemption, for your redemption, for our redemption.

It was necessary for the Messiah to suffer. Why? Because that's what we all deserve, death, eternal death.

The Redeemer paid a price for our redemption. Death people like us deserve eternal death because we have sinned against the eternal God.

But God, who is rich in mercies, who is faithful to the covenant, has visited us to give life to every kind of death people.

[21 : 34] But how Jesus gives life to death people by living and dying for them? Our disgusting and secret sins deserves hell.

But Jesus experienced hell on the cross. It was necessary that Christ should suffer these things to give us life.

That's why the cross, the words of the dead, Jesus is a priest who gives the best offering to be sacrificed. He is the prophet who teaches us that it is not about our deeds or about our works, but about God's works and mighty deeds in our hearts for his glory.

And finally, because he is the king, he has risen to enter in his glory. It's all about Christ's sufferings and his glory.

The person who talked to them was the risen almighty king, and he is here today. How are we going to respond to his message?

[22 : 53] This is what the Bible teaches, the gospel, this beautiful covenant, this beautiful intimate relationship between God and his people.

It's the heart of the Bible. But let me ask you this, is this reality in your heart?

These two disciples, they knew about this. They knew about the scriptures. But what about that reality in your heart, in your family, in our conversations between husbands and wives with our children?

Do they know about this? Do we know about this? That it's not about us, but about Christ.

It is not about our failures, but it is how God works with non-perfect people like us, with broken people like us.

[24 : 01] Just to show that the most beautiful person in the universe and in the church is God himself, Jesus Christ. So let's go to the final point about the second blessing of walking with Jesus, or Jesus walking with us.

A real knowledge about the person and work of Christ. So the first blessing is that the scriptures points out to Christ.

It's all about Christ, but now the third, this final blessing here, it is not just about knowing about this information, but it's a real knowledge of the person and work of Christ.

We see here that these two disciples urged Him strongly, and they told Jesus, stay with us.

This is what a person who loves God's war does. Stay with us, Jesus. It is not just about a quick reading or maybe just 30 minutes of a sermon, but we want more about Him.

[25 : 11] We want more about the one who gave His life for us, the reason of our lives. We want to know more about Him, and we cry out to Jesus, stay with us.

Stay with our family, stay with my children. What is our answer to the war of God from Monday to Saturday?

Do we want more about Jesus? Do we want more to know more about Him? Jesus is so gracious that He brings His word to the table to walk with them.

To teach them shows the nearness of Jesus, but to keep talking around a table shows more intimacy.

Jesus is not just walking with us, but He's inviting us to His table. And not just you, but to you and your children, the covenant children.

[26 : 17] And not just you and your family, but all the families here with different realities, with different problems and issues. God is inviting us to enjoy Him.

Verse 30, when He was at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were open and they recognized Him, and He banished them from their sight.

This is the third time of a meal with Jesus here in the gospel. The first was the feeding of the five thousand, the second at the Passover, and now the first one after His resurrection.

This is what Jesus does, the risen king.

The risen king sharing this meal with his friends in intimacy.

[27 : 24] This is the heart of Jesus to teach us this reality, but near to them, so close to His heart.

This is the kind of teaching that we need about Jesus, near to Jesus, so close to His heart.

In the simple things of life, bread, through the exposition of the Scriptures, and a simple meal. In a simple meal, Jesus reveals His gospel.

So do we realize about the importance of hearing the exposition of the word every Sunday, and if you have the opportunity to come twice to the evening service, do we realize the importance of sharing the reality of the gospel in a meal with friends, in simple things of life, with friends who need restoration and redemption, same as you and same as me?

Do we realize the importance of knowing our Bibles, knowing doctrine, and sharing the gospel in simple things?

[28 : 44] When you put all these things together, you can hear these words, they said to each other, did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?

Burning hearts! And this means a strong emotion. And let me highlight this, this is a strong emotion. This is something that passes from the ear to the head and then to the heart to then move the hands and feet.

This is an indescribable joy, and this is the joy of salvation. This is the joy of redemption. They had a we hope of redemption, but now their hearts are full of the reality of redemption.

These are burning hearts. It is a burning heart because they have the burning bush in their hearts. They have burning hearts because the Spirit that is in, this is the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit who is in Jesus' hearts is with them, them.

Burning hearts. Let me quote just to finish an old pastor.

[30 : 12] Calvin, he said, let us remember that it is the proper fruit of heavenly doctrine. Whoever may be the minister of it, to kindle the fire of the Spirit in the hearts of men, to purify it and cleanse the affection of the flesh, or rather to burn them up, and to kindle a truly fervent love of God and by its flame, to carry away man entirely to heaven.

This is what Calvin said about this. So let me say this, or Calvinism or all reformed theology must be a burning theology.

We have to get rid of all call theology. There's not such a thing as call doctrine or call presbyterianism.

This is one of the things that I really love about studying all reform theology. They were burning hearts. They would just die here at grass market 100 years ago just because they really believe that man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

Get rid of nominal Christianity and let's pray for having a good and burning theology for a whole life. This is our heritage and this is being a Christian and in this case we are members of this free church, or a presbyterian church.

[31 : 53] This is one this we man said, John Knox there in San Giles 100 years ago. If someone asked him, and I'm finishing with this, if someone asked John Knox, hey, what was the seed of the reformation here in Scotland?

He gave his reply and I quote him, God gave his Holy Spirit to simple man in great abundance. God gave his Holy Spirit to simple man in great abundance. Sharing a coffee, sharing a good burger with haggis or whatever you want, and simple things in your house, whatever, sharing the gospel with hearts filled with the Holy Spirit.

It is about simple man with the Holy Spirit in great abundance. Burning hearts filled with the Word and the Spirit of God can reform families, churches, and societies for God's glory.

And how can this happen? Not because of you, not because they were walking with Jesus mainly, but because God, the God of the Covenant, Jesus Christ, come to walk with us.

[33 : 15] He comes to walk with us. If you are far away from him, God is coming to you. If you are running away from Jesus, these are the promises of the Covenant.

God is the good shepherd and he's going in this very moment. He's walking with you, even if you feel that you are so far away.

God loves this far away heart because he gave his life for you and for me, for us. Because he'll live and die for you and for me and for us in order that we may live with burning hearts for his glory.

In simple things as the Lord's Supper. So let's pray together.

Oh God, we thank you for your Word and for your Spirit and we ask for forgiveness of our sins, for being so slow of heart.

[34 : 41] Maybe we are experts about discussing about all this, about the Gospel, about church, things.

Even we have this evangelical language in our mouth. But please, oh God, forgive our sins.

Because something we are just getting used to talk about this without this sense of this reality. That this is true, that this is true.

That you took human nature to live and die for us. And we ask for your Holy Spirit.

Not just to be amazed of this good report, but have burning hearts. Even when we are so, when we are dealing maybe with depression or anxieties for tomorrow.

[35 : 51] But oh God, restore the joy of salvation, the joy of the cross. But the joy of the cross in fellowship with brothers and sisters.

Thank you because you, yes, you restore that. Because you are faithful to your Word. You are faithful to yourself.

You are faithful to this covenant. And we want to share that reality here in the Lord's Supper. Thank you for taking the bread and thank you for giving yourself the living, the true breath of life.

Oh God, help us to eat every day of this living bread. And to give it to others. Thank you. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.