

Intro: I'm always fascinated at this time of the year to watch the History Channel, or the Discovery Channel specials on Jesus. It's amazing. They go to some of the most elite universities and talk with scholars of all kinds, like people with 3 PH.D's one each from Harvard, Yale and Oxford, and it's always the same...Well...THIS is what the Bible says...BUT WE IN OUR GREAT WISDOM...Have discovered something NO ONE EVER knew before! Like the smartest people for 2000 years have totally missed the point...and THEY have discovered the truth! Every year...same thing...DIFFERENT "TRUTH"!

Listen...Easter really isn't that hard to understand. It might be hard to ACCEPT...It might be hard to EMBRACE...It might be hard to APPLY...But it really isn't that hard to understand. You see, when God wants us to know something...He doesn't make it hard....He's like...Here you go! And that is what we see in Luke 24...God doing what He does....making it EASY...and people doing what we do...Making it HARD!

Luke 24:35

1. The Truth of Easter

1-12

- The FACTS: The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ
- The SIGNIFICANCE: 1 Cor 15:1-6 Details
12-14 Without Resurrection preaching and faith our empty, groundless
19 If our hope is only for this life...pointless: Price without reward!

Now, we can accept it or reject it, but what we CAN'T do is change it! I don't care how many degrees you have, how many classes you attend, how many books you have written or how many "secrets" you think you have discovered, the disciples and the early Christians, including Paul, were explicitly clear on what Easter and the Gospel is/means

In this instance you can't have "Your Truth" (That's YOUR TRUTH) God's Truth Trumps your truth every single time

2. The Struggle of Easter

13-27

****Knowledge isn't Enough:** Simply knowing the facts isn't sufficient. You CAN'T GET more knowledge than the men and women had that first Easter. If knowing the facts of Easter was enough, they had it nailed. Everything they needed was there...They KNEW the facts...They just didn't believe!

- Disciples had been told by Jesus before it happened...and by the women after!
- Women had been told by the angels vs 11: Idle: Hysterical, Lunatic, Insane
- The two disciples on Road:
~Walked with Jesus ~Talked with Jesus ~Explained it all TO Jesus! ~Time w Jesus
They KNEW all the facts...had it explained in detail by Jesus...even OT...but they didn't believe!

Let's be clear...Knowledge ABOUT Jesus doesn't give you a relationship WITH Jesus James 2:19 Believe/Tremble!

****Matter of Heart:** When you read the story closely, the issues come into focus. It's a HEART issue! Notice what Jesus says to the disciples on the Road.

Vs 25 "He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"

WHY??? Vs 16: *But their eyes were kept from recognizing Him.*

If we KNOW all the facts...What keeps us from Jesus? The same things that kept the men/disciples/women

- Lack of Faith: 1 Co 2:14 Natural Man doesn't understand things of the Spirit (Death is final)
- Spiritual blindness 2Cor 4:3-4 "The god of this age (devil) has blinded the mind of unbelievers"
- God stops them: As HE did in John with the Blind man for period of time to fulfill His purposes
- Not what we expect: "We had hoped" We don't see it...because we aren't expecting: (Me and the Pantry!)
- Slow of Heart: We CHOOSE NOT TO BELIEVE: We just don't believe...or don't WANT to Believe: (Butch)

So then...what makes the difference? What happens in our hearts to bring us from just being someone that has the FACTS to someone that REALLY knows Jesus, has their life transformed...SEES Him and SHARES Him?

3. The Promise Of Easter:

vs 28-35

When you look at this passage of scripture there are 5 things that made the difference between knowing ABOUT Jesus and knowing Jesus in a PERSONAL and life changing way. Something happened to these two men...and to the rest of the disciples that changed them from a discouraged, beaten down, hopeless group of people hiding out from the Romans and the Religious leaders to a group of men and women that LITERALLY transformed their world....and ours!

They went from hiding out and not saying anything...like Peter telling the other 10, I'm going back to fishing, to a man that would stand up in the city of Jerusalem and preach at the top of his voice about the risen savior such that thousands put their faith in Jesus? What changed? What happened? What made the difference?

5 Difference Makers In The Life Of A Disciple

1. A Heartfelt Invitation For Jesus To Be With You

Vs 29: Urged him Strongly

Lit = *to constrain someone, to strongly urge, to beg someone*

Is 55:6 *"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near."*

Illus: Early Revivalism "Mourners Bench" or Anxious Bench!

Applic: Today we are like: If YOU are ready: Ok, pray this prayer, say these words...No...Seek after God!

2. A Decision To REMAIN With Jesus...In His presence.

Vs 30 Abide with us!

Lit = *to ABIDE...REMAIN...stay with for time, put down roots and stay in my presence, remain in relationship*

John 15:4 *"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."*

Illus: For many of us, we don't expect Jesus to STAY with us: We meet Him at church, devotions, worship But the idea that HE is going to remain with us every single step of our path, every minute of the day...We are like...I'm not sure I WANT Him to go where I go, do what I do, see what I see, hear what I say!

Applic: If you want true relationship, then you have to BE with someone! Think of it this way. Suppose you asked someone to marry you, or agreed to marry them, had the wedding ceremony, and then said, you know, I'm going to spend an hour with you one day a week, and maybe, if its convenient and works out, 10 min day

3. A Request To Open Your Eyes To Spiritual Things.

Vs 31

Opened: Lit = *to open completely; to see fully and comprehensively (before physically, now spiritually)*

1Cor 2:14 *"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

We need the same thing today that the men on the Road to Emmaus needed. We need God to open our eyes to spiritual things. Just like with them, Jesus is right here with us. We just don't see Him. Like me and the pantry, it's right there in front of our eyes...we just don't recognize Him. We need Him to open our eyes, just like He did with the blind men He healed. If YOU don't see Him...and you WANT to see Him...pursue Him!

4. Look For The Marks Of His Presence In Your Life!

Vs 31

Recognized Him: Lit = *to know upon some mark, to acknowledge or to comprehend, (distinguishing marks)*

What was it that made the men recognize Jesus? Blessing Bread? Familiar? Marks In Hands! Nailprints

Applic: The marks of Jesus hands are all over your life if you will just open your eyes and SEE them! But, just like the men on the road, we don't see Him, because we don't expect Him and we aren't looking for Him. A disciple is looking for Him and expecting Him to be present. Greatest promise: I am WITH YOU!

5. Ask Him to Speak To Your Heart Through Scriptures. Vs 32

Burn: Lit = *to set on fire, to consume, to be burning with passion*

Notice the instrument God used in their hearts. It was the Scriptures (OT) So Jesus opened the word of God, and explained it to them, telling them everything that HAD to happen, why it happened. Without being offensive to those who say to me, God can speak to me from nature, boat, golf course...of course He can. But the MOST common way He speaks...the way He speaks directly and with passion and power...Scripture!

And if you are seeking to KNOW Him...All you are going to know from nature is His presence and His power. But you aren't going to find anything there about the Cross, and redemption, and New Life. Comes from Scripture.

Applic: That is why it is so important to be in worship, and in bible study, small group and devotions. Because you MEET Him in the Scriptures in a way entirely different than any other place.

CONCL: So, one question for you this morning as we close?

Do you know ABOUT Jesus...or Do you KNOW Jesus Personally?

Maybe you have been walking along side Him, and you Know the story, you know the facts, you in fact can tell someone else, just like they told Jesus...But your heart...it has never been changed. It has never been transformed, there has never been a time in which He spoke to you so clearly, so profoundly, so passionately that your heart burned within you.

And you WANT that. You want to be in THAT kind of relationship with Him

You can have that today.

Invite Him in, To STAY, Not just a passing Hi how are you, but to have a transformative relationship

Ask Him to open your eyes and Help you SEE the marks of His fingerprints all over your life. Help you see His hands

Ask Him to speak to your heart so profoundly, that just like the men on the Road, your heart burns within you.

Pursue Him....with everything you are...and ask Him to forgive your sin, enter your heart and life, STAY with you