**Sunday 26th April 2020 – video**

**Luke 24.13-35 Acts 2.14a,36-41**

**Introduction**

* Last week – difference meeting risen Lord made to people’s lives
* 10 disciples
* On Easter Day
* from fear – joy
* Thos
* Week after resurrection
* from questioning – worship
* today we are back on Easter Day with two other disciples
* from despair – hope

**Road to Emmaus**

* story only in Luke’s gospel – first of his 3 accounts of meetings with risen Jesus
* 2 people walking 7 miles from Jerusalem to village of Emmaus
* 1 = Cleopas
* Other not named
* Wife Mary who at foot of cross as J died?
* Luke?
* Probably later on Sunday afternoon
* When arrive in Emmaus ‘nearly evening’
* Wise to let heat of day go a bit before set out
* Knew that the women and some of the disciples had found the tomb empty but ‘they did not see Jesus’
* Discussing events of previous week as walking along
* Trying to make sense of all that had happened
* Joined by a stranger – gives them detailed systematic Bible Study which encourages them
* They invite him to join them for supper – finally recognize Jesus who promptly disappears
* They rush back to Jerusalem to tell the others what has happened

**Today**

* Wonder how you are feeling today
* Full of understanding and joy and with enough energy to do 2 x 7 mile walks
* Confused and despondent and weary
* Today’s reading: Once again meeting the risen Jesus transforms the life of his followers and make them full of faith
* What might the reading say to us about
* how we might meet with Jesus
* difference such a meeting might make to our lives

1. **They find understanding in the Bible**

* Cleopas and his companion walking along trying to make sense of what had happened to Jesus
* Why had this prophet ‘powerful in word and deed before God and all the people’ been crucified by his own people?
* What did that do to their hopes that he would redeem Israel?
* What were they to make of the significance of it being the third day?
* How were they to make sense of the empty tomb
* All good questions which could draw them nearer or further from God (cp last week they become not faithless but faithful)
* Not invigorated by discussion or making progress – downcast when stranger stops them
* J
* not say tada it’s me! Immediately putting end to questions and doubts
* meets them where they are
* gives them best Bible study ever
* takes them through whole of Old Testament (Moses and all the prophets) and explains why Messiah needed to suffer and this was his path to glory
* Jesus’ Bible study on road to Emmaus reminds us
* That Bible will help us understand who God is and how he is at work in our lives – ans to our questions there
* J did not have the NT (not written yet) – import of OT if want to understand who Jesus is and what he has done for us
* E.g. J not just bless and brake bread at Last Supper – also feeding of the 5,000
* Part of significance of what J did is echoes of God feeding Israelites in the wilderness
* Original audience knew this
* They discuss it with J (John 6)
* It is why they want to make him king
* We will find story of God giving Israelites Manna and Quails in Exodus 16
* Reading story will help us understand what Jesus did and why
* ‘All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.’ 2 Timothy 3.16-17
* If want to meet with Jesus – reading his word a good way to go about it
* All of it is useful
* Tempting just to read our favourite bits
* Need to read it more systematically than that
* Use scheme or work through a book of the Bible
* If want an overview so see how it all fits together The Bible Course
* Shows how whole Bible speaks of Jesus
* If not done course – available free on line
* Bits we don’t understand – ask HS and other people to help us understand what Bible says and what it means for us

1. **They offer Jesus hospitality**

* Cleopas and companion experience peace of Christ as Jesus opened the Scriptures to them
* Not recognize it at time
* Make the connection later
* Understand that their hearts were burning within them while they were with Jesus because they were experiencing the hope and peace of being with the risen Jesus
* Might not have made the connection if they had not invited Jesus to join them for supper
* Jesus didn’t impose himself on them – doesn’t impose himself on us
* Bridegroom who knocks and waits for an answer
* Loves us so waits for us to open door to him and invite him in
* If we want to meet with Jesus
* have to ask him in
* make time for him
* said hurry is one of greatest enemies of our age: ‘in our rushing, bulls in china shops, we break our own lives’ Ann Voskamp (Canadian Christian blogger)
* one of gifts lockdown might be more time – more space – spend it with Jesus!

1. **They recognize Jesus in his actions**

* Caravaggio – The Supper at Emmaus (1601)
* In order of service for you
* Moment when disciples recognize J
* Servant looking on in bewilderment
* Startled Reaction of disciples shown by their action moving back
* Even bowl of fruit on table seem to be stepping back in amazement – looks about to fall
* Luke – ‘When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight’
* Tends to make us think of Communion
* Something powerful in actions of sharing communion together that enable us to meet with Jesus in powerful way
* missing meeting with you and Jesus as we gather around the communion table in Sunnyside
* looking forward to day when we can drawer nearer to God and one another through Holy Communion after lockdown
* Not nec Last Supper that Cleopas and his companion are reminded of
* They not nec even at the Last Supper
* May have been feeding 5,000 or just one of many meals J had with friends and sinners
* This is J taking normal loaf of bread at normal meal – not ceremonial meal like Passover – giving thanks to God for it and sharing it with others
* Barclay: Jesus not only host in his church but a guest in every home
* reminds us can be with Jesus as the dinner table in our homes as easily as at his table in church
* Point - In J’s actions that they recognized him
* We all have distinctive actions we do whether or not realise it
* E.g. Dad – rub hands on thighs
* Can recognize those we love from distance by way standing or walking
* Can recognize Jesus and his presence by actions
* We can see Jesus in others when they do what he would have done
* People can meet with him in us when we do as he would do
* Need to have eyes open so can recognize him when we see him

1. **They went and told others**

* Cleopas and his companion meet with Jesus in word and deed that afternoon and are transformed by the encounter
* Dashed hopes replaced by joy
* Rush back to Jerusalem to tell the others
* Evening now – not nec wise time to make a journey – roads dangerous – already walked 7 miles – but this news will not wait
* ‘Got up at returned at once to Jerusalem…Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.’
* Life is not supposed to continue as it was when we meet with Risen Jesus
* supposed to change things
* supposed to change us
* supposed to be news that we share
* Meeting with the Risen Christ enables us to then go and tell others about what has happened
* And going to tell others may mean we hear about the difference he has made to them too – Cleopas and his friend discover that others have met with Jesus too

**Conclusion**

* Difference encountering Jesus makes:

‘In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine and saved me from the law of sin and death.’24th May 1738 **-** John Wesley

* How will you meet with Jesus this week?
* What difference will that make?
* Who will you tell?
* Why not invite the HS to show you how you might meet with Jesus and pray that we may we too know our hearts strangely warmed by the presence of our Risen Lord?