

WALKING WITH CLOUDED VISION

Luke 24:13-35

Have you ever found yourself wondering whether you can really believe God?

Have you wondered whether God's promises work for everyone else,
but not for you?

Serendipity Bible: What does it take to trigger a spiritual crisis in your experience?

- a. Financial panic?
- b. Anger with God over a personal tragedy?
- c. Disappointment in a relationship?
- d. Domestic problems?
- e. Questions or doubts about your faith?
- f. Disillusionment about your church?
- g. Lack of direction from God?

If you've gone through such experiences and found yourself doubting God
and wondering whether He knows what He's doing, you're not alone.

Christian people down through the ages have asked similar questions.

In Luke 24, a couple of Jesus' followers have just been there.

They've been through the most traumatic experience of their lives.

They can't figure out what's going on.

They're discouraged disciples without reason to be discouraged.

Yet they're asking themselves, "Has God gone to sleep?" Is He on vacation?

Can't He see what's happening? Doesn't He care?

The whole situation makes no sense to them.

Their hopes and dreams are shattered.

This in spite of the fact that they've just heard reports affirming the resurrection!

Everything's happening just as God planned! But they can't see it.

They can't believe it! It's too good to be true.

They're discouraged because God hasn't done what they want Him to do.

AUTHENTICATION OF THE SON OF MAN 24:1-53

CONFIRMATION OF THE RESURRECTION 24:1-12

Witness of the empty tomb 24:1-3

Witness of the angels 24:4-8

Witness to the unbelieving disciples 24:9-12

The women and Peter (et. al.) bring word back to the disciples,
but no one believes what they saw.

Even those who follow Jesus are surprised by His resurrection
and find it hard to believe, in spite of His repeated promise beforehand.

The event is confirmed by an angelic appearance to the women
but the disciples dismiss their testimony as nonsense.

PREDICTION: DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST WERE PREDICTED IN ADVANCE

O.T. Prophecies:

Death of Christ

Ps. 22:1, 6-8, 16-18

Dan. 9:25-26

Zech. (11) 12:10

Isa. 53:1-12 (cp. Acts 8:27-35) **53:3-10**

Resurrection Ps. 16:9-11 (Acts 2:24-36)

Christ's prophecies:

Matt. 12:40; 16:21; 20:18-19; 26:24; 27:28-32

Mark 8:31; 9:9; 9:30-32

Luke 9:22; 9:43-45; 18:31-34

John 7:33; 10:11; 12:23-24

PROBLEM: IN SPITE OF THE PROMISES,

THE DISCIPLES ARE DEFEATED – >FILLED WITH DOUBTS.

Matt. 28:17 *"When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted."*

Mark 16:11 *"When they heard that Jesus was alive, and that she had seen Him, they didn't believe it."*

16:12 *"Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. ¹³ These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either."*

16:14 *"Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; He rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen Him after He had risen."*

Luke 24:11 *"They did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense."*

24:38 *"He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?"*

24:41 *"While they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, He asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"*

John 20:9 *"They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead."*

20:13 *"They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put Him."*

20:15 *"Woman," He said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking He was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have put Him, and I will get him."*

20:25 *"So the other disciples told him [Thomas], "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe it."*

This was hardened unbelief

–no way was he going to take their word without clear evidence.

THE THERAPY: REVIEW THE PLAN AGAIN!

In spite of their inability to believe the good news, Jesus graciously came alongside these followers, walked with them and listened to their "animated heated dialogue."

He goes over the plan again.

Matt. 28:6 *"He is not here; He has risen, just as He said. . . ."*

Mark 16:7 *"Go, tell His disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you.'"*

Luke 24:5-8 *"In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead?' ⁶ 'He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you while He was still with you in Galilee, ⁷ 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and on the third day be raised again.' ⁸ Then they remembered His words."*

24:44-48 *"He said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.' ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, 'This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.'"*

Peter eventually learned the lesson – Acts 2:29-36 – 1 Pet. 1:10-11

EXPLANATION OF THE RESURRECTION 24:13-35

APPEARANCE TO THE TWO FOLLOWERS

In addition to the testimony of the women, the resurrection was confirmed by the two followers that met Him on the road to Damascus.

24:13-18 *"Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?' They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?'"*

The solution to the dilemma is there with them but they don't recognize Him.

Why?

They didn't expect to find Him there!

They didn't understand the Scriptures.

They didn't believe what He Himself had told them.

This reality undermines the view that they were convinced by deception or wishful thinking! They had no such expectation. It took them by surprise.

UNBELIEF OF THE TWO FOLLOWERS 24:19-24

"What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who

said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

There's a touch of humor in Jesus' question in 24:19, "What things?"

He's the center of it all, yet He asks them to explain how they understand what they've been observing.

In a real sense, what's at stake here isn't what actually happened;
it's how they *perceive* what's happened.

EXPLANATION FROM THE SCRIPTURES 24:25-32

"He said to them, 'How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!'²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?'"²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther.²⁹ But they urged him strongly, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them.³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.³² They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'"

Jesus explains Scriptures about Himself
and reveals Himself to them.

Their problem:

they don't believe all the prophets wrote about Messiah.

The Lord gives a running exposition of practically the entire O.T.

Wouldn't it be great to hear Him explain all the Scriptures about Himself.

This was some Bible conference!

God's Word is applied directly to their problem by greatest Teacher ever.

Yet their vision was clouded.

They still don't understand.

All they know: their hearts are burning within them and they want more.

So they urge Him to stay with them.

Is that the cry of our hearts when we are in the Lord's presence?

We know the answers, but our hearts are crying for more.

We aren't satisfied until we have more of His presence.

Jesus opens the Scriptures to them,

and then He opens their eyes so they can see Him.

It isn't until they see the truth of the Scriptures,

and their hearts burn within them,

that their eyes are open to see Him.

They're perplexed and confused, not even aware Jesus is with them.

He was there all the time.

The problem: their eyes aren't open to see Him.

They're not expecting Him and don't recognize Him,
but He's there with them in the midst of their perplexity!

He is for us as well!

They discover that *the evidence* of His presence is there all along.

Their "heavenly heartburn" should have tipped them off,
but they miss the evidence; they aren't expecting to find it!

CONFIRMATION FROM SIMON 24:33-35

"They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together 34 and saying, 'It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' 35 Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread."

Jesus' followers are convinced by His appearance to these two and to Peter.

They're so excited they can't wait until morning to take the news back. They run back the 7 mile journey in the dark that very night.

This news has to be shared!

DISBELIEF OF THE RESURRECTION

1. Though they've been with the Lord, they don't believe it.
2. Though they've heard His Word, they don't believe it.
3. Though they hear testimony of witnesses,
they still don't believe it.

What difference does Christ's resurrection make in our life?

Can you identify with the struggle of these followers? Have you been there?

Even when you've spent time with God . . .

Even when you've heard His Word . . .

Even when you hear others testify what God has shown them . . .

Somehow what God is doing doesn't make sense?

How can any good come out of what God is allowing to happen in MY life?

Many people who profess to trust Him, don't really believe His word.

All too often we keep them company!

How many of His promises to us do we find ourselves doubting?

- He tells us that God sees us in Christ;
we doubt that God could ever love us because we're not worthy.
- He promises to supply all we need.
But when we can't see where it's coming from, we doubt and murmur.
- He promises that His work done in His way will never lack His supply,
and we worry when we don't see the budget figures being reached Sunday.

Then we cut back programs and wonder why God doesn't bless us!

What's it going to take before we learn to trust Him?

He's alive! Can we trust Him?!!