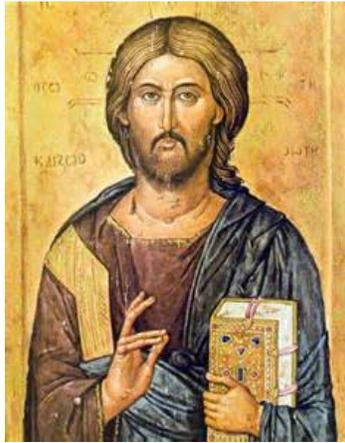


Dining in the Kingdom:



A look at meals and Communion in Luke's Gospel.

Week Six: Luke 24:13-35 (The Road to Emmaus)

Introduction:

It would be impossible to overstate or exaggerate the importance of this event to the Christian proclamation. It is well known in art, drama, and every form of expression.





These 2 images (Caravaggio and Rembrandt) are only a drop in the bucket!) There is an international retreat program known as Road To Emmaus, and it is the name of hospitals and ministries of every kind.

Luke 24:13-35

The Walk to Emmaus

¹³ Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' ¹⁹ He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before

God and all the people,²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,²³ and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.’²⁵ Then he said to them, ‘Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!’²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?’²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.’ So he went in to stay with them.³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.³² They said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?’³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.³⁴ They were saying, ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!’³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

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Background:

Cleopas is one of the 2 travelers this Easter Sunday evening, and the other is not named—he could be anybody. (Us.) Cleopas is not named anywhere else in the New Testament, but well known in early tradition as St. Cleopas the apostle.

Emmaus, a village 7 miles from Jerusalem, is the home of Cleopas. This distance is significant—the 2 are quitting the Way, but they aren't going so far that there is no turning back if they change their minds.

It is significant that they are a pair—recalling the 70 sent out 2 by 2. (Lk 10:1)

Vs 16: “Their eyes were kept from recognizing him.” This was common in other resurrection appearances—remember the Mary Magdalene “Saw Jesus but did not know that it was Jesus,” (Jn 20:14) until he actually spoke and called her by name. Scholars point out that the disciples were kept from recognizing him by their lack of understanding about the Passion—hence he taught them through the prophets about the necessity of his suffering.

Vs 28: “He walked ahead as if he were going on.” Jesus did the same thing when he walked on water—“He intended to pass them by..” (Mk 6:48)

The gathering:

This was an informal meal of hospitality, in which Jesus was the guest, but he acted as the host.

This is the evening of Easter Sunday—the two had heard stories of an empty tomb, but did not believe. Eugene LaVerdiere writes: “Like those who went to the tomb, the disciples needed to see Jesus in order to believe. The irony in their statement is that they were now telling this to Jesus. Seeing Jesus was one thing, recognizing him quite another.”

Vs 29: “Stay with us.” This verb in Greek is *meno*, and can be translated as stay, remain, or dwell. It is one of Luke’s favorite words and we hear it everywhere:

Mary stays with her cousin, Elizabeth (Lk:1:56) The Gerasene demoniac cannot stay in a house (Lk8:27) Jesus stayed with Zacchaeus (Lk:19:5) and a whole bunch of other references!

Vs 30: Again, we see the Eucharistic pattern of he “took, blessed, broke, and gave the bread.”

This gathering is unique among the meals, because Jesus is resurrected from the dead.

Teaching:

The primary teaching down through the ages has to do with the communion service and the Last supper: Jesus is known to us in the breaking of the bread, and the Last supper lives on in every time and place. Emmaus was the first of a million, million communion meals.

A lot of teaching is included (all the prophets, etc.,) but we are not old what Jesus actually said. He opened their minds through the Scripture, and he opened their eyes to see him in the meal fellowship they shared.

Questions to think about:

How does this meal remind you of a Communion service?

Why do you think it has so captured the artistic imagination?

Have you ever heard something that made your heart burn within you?

Do you think Jesus would have really walked on by??

Is anything keeping us from recognizing him?