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BIG IDEA – Resurrecting hope isn't easy, but it is possible when faith is activated when the Spirit of God speaks to you.

Scripture Focus – Luke 24:32 NLT They said to each other, “**Didn’t our hearts burn within us as he talked with us** on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?”

Have you ever hit a point where hope felt like a cruel joke? Where everything failed or feels like its failing miserably.

The disciples so **thoroughly** believed that Jesus' death was permanent **or** that someone stole his body from the hewn tomb!

- After **Jesus’ resurrection** on Sunday morning.
- After **hearing Mary Magdalene tell him.**
- After **seeing the empty tomb.**
- After **seeing Jesus in person** that same Sunday night.
- And, after **Jesus breathed on them** giving them the Holy Spirit.

A week later Peter decides he’s going fishing!

Simon Peter said, “**I’m going fishing.**” “We’ll come, too,” they all said. So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing all night. **John 21:3 NLT**

Why?

Some have said that Peter, riddled with guilt for his denial of Christ figured that he was **fired** as a disciple.

Some believe that Peter experienced burnout and had to return to some familiarity before deciding how to move forward.

We do not know why because John doesn’t tell us, and conjecture gets us nowhere.

What we do know. In a highly emotional state of mind, **Peter decides to go back to fishing, the other five men join him. Peter is leading, even in his despondency.**

A Story.

Kent used to have it all—or at least that's what it looked like —the house, the career, the social circle. But life unraveled fast. A divorce he didn't see coming, a layoff he thought would never happen, and a drinking habit that slowly took the wheel. He found himself sleeping in the basement of a friend's house—not because he was rebuilding, but because **he had nowhere else to go**.

One night, sitting on the cold concrete floor in of a basement under a bare, swinging lightbulb, he whispered a prayer that was more surrender than faith: **"God, if You're real... this is Your moment."** He didn't expect anything. He didn't even know if he believed anymore. But something surprising happened: **PEACE**. Not an answer. Not a miracle. Just the sense that maybe he wasn't as alone as he thought.

The next morning, he received a voicemail on his burner phone. A former co-worker he hadn't heard from in years:

"Hey man, I don't know why, but you were on my mind. If you need anything... a job, a place to stay... just say the word."

He lifted his eyes towards heaven, not because everything was fixed, but because something had changed: He had opened his heart to hope.

Sometimes, hope returns not in a flood of light or in a spectacular miracle —but in a whisper, a phone call, a simple breakfast on the beach or a stranger walking beside you on a dusty road.

That's exactly what happened to Peter and it's also where we find two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Cleopas and a friend—maybe even Luke himself—hit the road for Emmaus on that first Easter eve, heavy with grief. Jesus had been crucified, buried... and was now missing. Their faces said it all: **hope was gone**. They were walking away from Jerusalem, away from the dream, trying to make sense of the loss.

What do you do when death or disappointment drains your faith?

But hope wasn't gone. **Hope was about to walk alongside them.**



Broken dreams in the rearview mirror

That same day two of Jesus' followers were walking to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened. Luke 24:13-14

- Luke doesn't immediately tell us who the two followers of Jesus are. But, like Peter, they decided to leave city and get away from all the pain they had experienced over the past several days.
- You are aware that **pain and sadness can be associated with a physical place – right?** There have been geographic places, a certain store, restaurant or even a church where have had very negative experiences and realized they did not want to back to that building or even that block!

Pain can be associated with a physical place. There have been people hurt by our church, and it became difficult to return to this physical place, to walk through our front doors. Some would say, "well that's silly. **The building didn't hurt anyone. And you'd be right.**" But the **pain folks experienced happened by the way they were treated by people inside this building.** It ended up getting transferred to their heart as **a place of pain.**

They wanted to get out of Jerusalem, for so many reasons, grief and disappointment may have been the most pressing.

Cleopas was hurt by Jesus not being who he thought Jesus was supposed to be!

Have you ever felt that God wasn't doing what you thought He should be doing?

Grief or pain can numb us or blind us from experiencing **hope.**



What Do We Know about Cleopas

Cleopas had a political understanding of the Messiah which blinded him from Jesus' true purpose for coming. He had hoped Jesus would, "redeem Israel" from its Roman oppressor ([Luke 24:21](#)). In this passage, **the word used for redeem is the Greek word *lytroo*, which means to liberate or set free.** In the mind of the average Jew, **the redemption promised by the Messiah would replicate the redemption Israel experienced from Egypt.** They expected Israel to dismantle the Roman authorities and ascend once more to its Golden Age as seen in the days of David and Solomon.



Jesus entered into their struggle.

As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things, Jesus himself suddenly came and

began walking with them. But God kept them from recognizing him. He asked them, “What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?” They stopped short, sadness written across their faces. Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, “You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn’t heard about all the things that have happened there the last few days.” “What things?” Jesus asked. “The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth,” they said. “He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. Luke 24:14-19a

Cleopas and possibly Luke himself left town that Easter eve, and had heard Jesus body was missing. As they left for the bedroom community of Emmaus, home to Cleopas, they were just two friends talking about the whole weekend of grief – Jesus had been crucified, buried and now missing.

They were so very sad; you could see it on their faces.

Luke describes the scene where the two are joined by a third person.

Jesus played the part of being “social media” naive to purposely get them to talk about what they **heard**, but also what they **believe**!

And it worked!

Jesus asked them what they were so fervently talking about.

Cleopas, gets snippy and replied, “**You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn’t heard** about all the things that have happened there the last few days.”

Basically, he was asking if Jesus had been living under a rock or something... well actually, **he had**!

Jesus wasn’t playing the fool, he wanted to listen!

“What things?” Jesus asked. **Luke 24:19a**



Jesus listened before he lectured.

At first Cleopas gave Jesus an earful!

“The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth,” **they said**. “He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him.

We had hoped he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel. This all happened three days ago. “Then some women from our group of his followers were at his tomb early this morning, and they came back with an amazing report. They said his body was missing, and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive! Some of our men ran out to see, and sure enough, his body was gone, just as the women had said.” **Luke 24:19b-24**

Notice Cleopas, at first, is speaking about what the Priests said about Jesus – “They said...He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people.

Then he switches to what he believed happened... “But our leading priests and other religious leaders **handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him.**”

Cleopas reveals why he and his friend were so devastated – “We had hoped he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel.”

As if to catch Jesus up, Cleopas then gives the most recent development which still focused on the news that spread among the followers of Jesus – “**some women from our group of his followers were at his tomb early this morning, and they came back with an amazing report. They said his body was missing, and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive! Some of our men ran out to see, and sure enough, his body was gone, just as the women had said.**”

At this point, the “stranger” speaks in **RED LETTER**, first person –

Then Jesus said to them, “You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn’t it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?” Luke 24:25-26

He definitely sounded like one of the Prophets of old with passion and clarity – calling them **anoétos: Foolish, lacking spiritual understanding or discernment** (no, Jesus did not curse, using the word, rhaka: Fool; Empty-headed; Worthless. Or even the word móros - lacking in moral understanding).

Once again, Jesus goes into Rabbi mode – not **correcting**, but teaching them.

Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. **Luke 24:27 NLT**

They had a couple of hours as they walked the down the road to Emmaus. Jesus had plenty of time to really get deep into conversation.

Jesus reminded them that the cross, the suffering AND death was God’s plan all along!

It might be helpful to remember that God's plan for us is filled with purpose! **But it really is all about us being formed into the image of Jesus** – as the Apostle Paul says to the churches in Galatia, his pain, his childbirth-like labor was all to have us conform to the image of Christ ([Galatians 4:19](#) & [Romans 8:29](#))



Burning hearts ignite hope.

By this time they were nearing Emmaus and the end of their journey. Jesus acted as if he were going on, but they begged him, “Stay the night with us, since it is getting late.” So he went home with them. **Luke 24:28-29**

There is this beautiful, total “middle eastern” moment, as the story comes to an end.

As they approach the town, Jesus acts like he is going to continue on. Such a Jesus move – right? You know Jesus is still fully human and fully God, right? This moment is such a smooth move by Jesus. Why?

For one, it is the **hospitality dance** in the culture of that day. “Oh, I don’t want to be a bother,” one says. “You? A bother? That’s ridiculous!” “We want you to stay in our home.” “Please, honor us by being our guest.”

Secondly, it’s the perfect way to end this lively discussion on the road. Now, over a good meal, there is peace – a Shalom over the things that were learned.

Thirdly, it was the **coolest way ever** for Jesus to reveal who he really is.

Luke tells us the “stranger” agreed to come with them to have a meal. And, obviously the guest, who behaved very much like a wise Rabbi would say the blessing. But, in this case, there was a throw-back memory that would only be unlocked by the senses that Cleopas and Luke would experience together.

Jesus “took the bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to them.”

When Jesus broke the bread there was a site, a sound and a smell all happening at the same time. How many times had Jesus “broke bread” sharing a meal with his disciples? How many times had they heard Jesus bless God?

And in that moment... **BRAIN BLOWN!**

As they sat down to eat, he took the bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to them. Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And at that moment he disappeared!" **Luke 24:31**

After Jesus just disappeared before their very eyes, they said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us?"

Their hope was fully restored as they made their way back to Jerusalem.

Why? Because they had walked with and eaten with Jesus – and He set them on a path where there was hope on the horizon!

And within the hour they were on their way back to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples and the others who had gathered with them, who said, "The Lord has really risen! He appeared to Peter." Luke 24:33-34

The walk, the conversation, the review of the Bible predictions and promises and the passion of Jesus teaching – opened their hearts to hope again!

What makes your heart burn? What moves us out of despair, or complacency?

What gives our life an urgency, an enthusiasm, a passion and purpose?

May hope sneak in where despair once lived!

May hope surprisingly ignite a passion where apathy once ruled!

SCRIPTURES

John 21:3 NLT

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Luke 24:13-14 NLT That same day two of Jesus' followers were walking to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened.

Luke 24:14-19a NLT

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Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Luke 24:28-29 NLT

By this time they were nearing Emmaus and the end of their journey. Jesus acted as if he were going on, but they begged him, "Stay the night with us, since it is getting late." So he went home with them.

Luke 24:30-32

As they sat down to eat, he took the bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to them. Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And at that moment he disappeared! They said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as he talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?"

Luke 24:33-34

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NOTES

In Luke 24:32 the burning heart is the word, Kaió - primarily means "to burn" or "to set on fire." But metaphorically, it is used as in the **burning of passion**. The term can also imply destruction by fire or the refining process that fire brings.

In today's terms it would be it made my heart skip a beat. Or Jesus' words **wrecked** me.



[Hope for Present and Future](#)

The disciples' **despondency turned into a profound hope** that the Messiah's mission was **not a failure but a victorious plan of redemption**. The resurrection remains the foundation of believers' confidence in forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and ultimate restoration (cf. Romans 6:4-5).



[The Source of Our Victory](#) by Gary Wilkerson

As Christians, we know that Jesus won the victory for us at Calvary. He defeated death, Satan, and the power of sin. The question remaining for believers is, "Now what? I know Jesus won my victory on the cross, but what about my present conflict? Where is his victory for the battle raging in my life right now?"



[Jesus Is Still Human](#) by David Mathis

The Man Christ Jesus. Paul also makes reference to Jesus' continuing humanity in 1 Timothy 2:5.

There is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Here Paul is writing after Jesus' ascension to heaven, and he is not afraid to refer to Jesus in the present as "the man Christ Jesus."

Jesus' work as the perfect mediator between God and man is not only dependent on his death in history at the cross but also in his continuing humanity. In his humanness, we are united to him by faith, and only in him are we united to God.



[Why It Matters That Jesus Was and Still Is Human](#) by Dane Ortlund

The Importance of Christ's Humanity.

One of the doctrines in the area of Christology that is difficult for some Christians to fully grasp is the permanent humanity of Christ. The impression often seems to be that the Son of God came down from heaven in incarnate form, spent three decades or so as a human, and then returned to heaven to revert back to his preincarnate state.

But this is Christological error, if not outright heresy. The Son of God clothed himself with humanity and will never unclothe himself. He became a man and always will be. This is the significance of the doctrine of Christ's ascension: he went into heaven with the very body, reflecting his full humanity, that was raised out of the tomb. He is and always has been divine as well, of course. But his humanity, once taken on, will never end.
