

Eastwood Baptist (AM, 1/4/'18) **"THE LORD HAS RISEN"** (Luke 24:13-35)

Introduction Think of a time when you have been sorrowful, then your sorrow has been turned into joy. What caused the change? Probably a transforming event. Someone you loved had been very sick, and then recovered. A precious possession had been lost, and was found. You had been in danger, then the danger was removed. But sometimes a transforming event is not enough. Often it is necessary also to hear the news of the transforming event, and to believe it. You have probably heard the stories of isolated soldiers after the end of World War Two – the war was over, but they hadn't heard the news or didn't believe it, so they behaved as though they were still at war. So it was with the good news of Jesus' resurrection. Indeed, so it still is today.

The Risen Jesus Not Known (24:13-16) **Read vv.13-16.** Luke begins this story by identifying two "of them" who were going to Emmaus. This must refer back to **v.11 - read.** So these were two of Jesus' disciples, and they had heard the good news that Jesus had risen from the dead. But they didn't believe the good news, just like many people this Easter. So they are sorrowful as they walk together, and as they talk. Do you think it would have helped them to talk about what had happened? I imagine that it would have helped, but it would not have made the kind of difference that believing the good news of Jesus' resurrection would have done. Imagine two Japanese soldiers together in the jungle after World War Two. It would have helped them to be together. But since they both believed that they were still at war, it would not have made a fundamental difference. And then Jesus comes up and walks along with them. Now this should have made a great difference. But it didn't, because they didn't recognise him. This might seem surprising at first, but we need to consider two things. One is that they had no expectation of seeing Jesus; indeed, they didn't even believe that it was possible. But I think that there a deeper reason, suggested by Luke's choice of words. He says that "they were kept from recognizing him". This is probably an example of what is called "the divine passive voice", which is common in the New Testament because Jews of the first century avoided naming God. I think that Luke is saying that God kept them from recognising Jesus – the right moment for him to be revealed to them was yet to come.

The Crucified Jesus Mourned (24:17-24) Jesus begins by asking the two disciples questions, and thus prompting them to express their ideas and feelings. Cleopas thinks that this man must lack information, when in fact it is he and the other disciple who are uninformed. But Jesus' second question – a simple "What things?" – prompts them to talk at length about him, although they don't know that they are also talking to him. **Read**

24:19-24. We see several things through what they say. We see that they loved and respected Jesus. We see that they are mourning his death. We see that they have dismissed the women's truthful testimony to Jesus' resurrection. We see that they have not been convinced even by the testimony of men who have seen the empty tomb. Jesus is remarkably patient with them, as he is with us. And as we need to be when we attempt to share the gospel with people. It is good if belief in Jesus' resurrection has become part of the fabric of our lives, but we need to understand that it is extremely difficult for many people to believe in it, even when they want to.

The Risen Jesus Opens the Scriptures (24:25-29) At this point Jesus becomes much more direct - **read 24:25-26.** Jesus speaks strongly to shock them out of despondency, out of their resistance to good news. They have rejected the testimony of the women, so he points them to the testimony of Scripture. Luke doesn't immediately tell us what effect this has, only giving the briefest summary of what Jesus said - **read 24:27.** But we learn later that it had great effect - **read 24:32.** And this is probably why they invite Jesus to stay with them - certainly it is more than mere politeness - **read 24:28-29.**

They Recognise the Risen Jesus (24:30-32) Suddenly, their eyes are opened. **Read 24:30-31.** There may have been something in the way Jesus took charge, despite not being the host, and distributed the bread which helped them to recognise him. But the expression "then their eyes were opened" suggests that the same God who had kept them from recognising Jesus now reveals him to them. God was in the business of opening eyes, and he still is. We need to remember this when we begin to lose hope that some people will ever see the risen Jesus. We need to keep praying for people whom God has laid on our hearts, and keep living so as to show Jesus to them, and keep asking God to give us the right words to say when an opportunity arises. Once these two disciples recognise Jesus, everything is changed. Now they know that the good news is true, that Jesus has indeed risen from the dead. Now they remember his teaching from Scripture with new understanding. Now their earlier memories of Jesus' life and mourning for his death are transformed, and sorrow is turned into joy. And now they are eager to be back in Jerusalem, and to share their joy with the other disciples.

They Rejoice Together (24:33-35) **Read 24:33a.** This is urgent! They can't wait! Even though it is now evening and it is a seven-mile walk to Jerusalem, they are eager to share their good news. They want to rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus in company with others, which is exactly why we are here this morning. So they go immediately to Jerusalem, where

they are encouraged by others and encourage these others in return.

Read 24:33b-35. They all say, "It is true! The Lord has risen!"

Let us say the same! Let us share the Easter greeting this morning!
"The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!"