



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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May 8, 2011
3rd Sunday of Easter
Sermon Text: [Luke 24:13-35](#)
Pastor Randy Ott

First Lesson: [Acts 24:10-21](#)
Psalm of the Day: [Psalm 67](#)
Second Lesson: [1 Peter 1:17-21](#)
Gospel Lesson: [Luke 24:13-35](#)

Hope From Heartburn

How many of you here are going to go out to eat for Mother's Day today? Raise your hand. Don't be shy; just raise your hand. If you're going out to eat for Mother's Day, raise your hand. Raise your hand so I can see it. You have one little guy going but not the rest of the family, huh?

It's nice that we take mothers out to eat on Mother's Day. It's a lot better than having the husbands cook, right? But think about this for a minute...a lot of times what we do is we take mom to a place we normally wouldn't go and encourage her to eat food she normally wouldn't eat, right? We want it to be special; eat something different. So what do we end up giving mom for a Mother's Day gift? Heartburn. They have this food they don't usually have and that's one of the results sometimes.

Heartburn seems to be our national pastime. I bet you could list more treatments for heartburn right now than you can list apostles of Jesus Christ. You start going through Tums and Roloids and Prilosec and all these other commercials you see on TV. I saw one last night that I didn't recognize for a new name I never heard before. I didn't want to learn it because I have too many pictures in my mind already of animated stomachs and acid producers being blocked by these medications you could take. If someone came from outside of our country, they would think our national pastime is heartburn treatment if they sat and watched our televisions for awhile. I understand it. Heartburn is not a fun thing. I certainly hope that you mothers that go out to eat today don't wake up in the middle of the night with acid reflux coming up your throats. It's not a fun thing. I've experienced it and I don't like it. So I understand why it's such big business.

Heartburn is something you want to be rid of, except today, when you consider the kind of heartburn that the Holy Spirit talks about through Luke this morning. I find this to be one of the most fascinating and surprising sections of Jesus' resurrection accounts.

These two disciples who are miserable, who are hopeless, who are beaten down and broken...I think that's what you can see when you read this...they see Jesus face to face and what's recorded for us is not, "Can you believe it? Jesus is alive." Or, "Can you believe it? We just saw Jesus." Their first words that the Holy Spirit records for us is nothing to do with "We just saw Jesus and he's alive." Their first words recorded for us are, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" Isn't that amazing? Doesn't that just shake where you are and who you are and what you think and how you approach things? Humanly

speaking, we'd expect these guys to be saying, "We just talked to a guy that was dead and now he's alive." But they aren't. They are talking about the power of the same things that you and I can hold in our hands every day of our lives.

Think of how often you and I are envious of these guys that got to sit at Jesus' feet and see him face to face. Listen to them. They are telling you to find your hope from heartburn, this kind of heartburn that comes from being immersed in the Word of God. It brings hope.

When these guys didn't have hope, they were heartbroken. Their hearts were aching. Their hearts were breaking. They were miserable. But when their hearts started burning with the Holy Spirit working through the Scriptures, they found a hope that sustained them, a hope that motivated them and a hope that moved them.

You can kind of sympathize with Cleopas and the unnamed guy, can't you? Their heads just had to be swimming. Everything that they had gone through; just think of what they had gone through in the past week. Palm Sunday...everything looks like maybe this is it. He's going to establish his kingdom, the kingdom they were expecting, this earthly kingdom of the Messiah. They had seen him teach in the temples during the week in power and the people just stood in awe with their jaws dropping at the power of his teaching. They had seen the miracles. They had seen what he had done. Maybe they had even been there when Lazarus was raised from the dead not all that long ago.

Now an arrest, a crucifixion and these stories that they can't quite wrap their heads around. The women went to the tomb and he's not there, and something about angels and all these things. The stone is rolled away but the body is not there. They don't know what's going on. It says as they were walking these seven miles to Emmaus, they were discussing these things. Literally it talks about them bouncing things back and forth off of each other. It was like they would say, "What about this?" And then they'd talk about it a little bit and then they'd come to a dead end, so they'd go in another direction. They were trying to digest everything, and they couldn't digest it. They couldn't understand it. They couldn't comprehend it.

One of the saddest verses in Scripture is what they said when this guy comes along, this clueless guy that doesn't seem to know anything about anything. He starts asking them questions. "What are you talking about?" Their answer is, "You fool. Anyone knows what we are talking about with everything that has been going on." Then they said "What we are talking about is Jesus of Nazareth." Here's the sad statement... "We had hoped that he was the one that was going to redeem Israel." It sounds like as they discussed everything they couldn't come up with an answer. It sounds like the hope was gone. The time and energy they had put into following Jesus and learning about Jesus, as they are looking at it now in face value, appears to have been wasted time. "We had hoped he was the one that would redeem Israel." It sounds like that hope is gone.

You would expect Jesus to say, "Look guys, it's me." But he doesn't. He kept them from recognizing him. Then he says something that probably surprises us a great deal. Doesn't it sound kind of harsh? Doesn't Jesus sound way too harsh here when he says, "How foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" Foolish? Slow of heart? These guys are beaten down. It said their faces were downcast. You've seen that, right? You walk to someone and they can't look you in the eye. Their heads are down. They can't even lift their eyes up because they are so beaten down and broken. When they are like this and they're hopeless and beaten down and broken, faces downcast, Jesus calls them fools and slow of heart.

What does God mean whenever God calls someone a fool? He's saying you're a fool because you had better knowledge and you didn't act on it. You knew better but you didn't know better. It's kind of like when a little kid dares another little kid to lick the flagpole and it's -30°F in the middle of winter. They go ahead and do it. That's a fool, right? You should have known better. Mom and dad have to tell them that was kind of foolish. You should have known better. You know what is going to happen if you do that. Your tongue is going to stick and it's going to be a problem. Jesus is here saying "You should have known better. You had every opportunity to know better." But they didn't know what Moses and the prophets had said. Sure they knew Moses and the prophets, but they knew them through the eyes of what they were used to thinking about and what they were used to seeing and not digging into it with eyes that searched and said, "God, open my heart so that I can learn great things from your Word." They were seeing with the eyes of the expectations of their day, that the Messiah would come and establish an earthly kingdom and get rid of the Romans and we'd go back to Solomon's day. They didn't see the pictures and the Psalms in Isaiah about the suffering Messiah who would have to suffer and die and then rise again. They didn't see those passages because they chose to focus on what they liked better, the conquering Messiah. It's understandable, but it's foolish.

It's just as foolish as when you and I want to operate by what we know, what we see, what we like, what we are used to, what we are comfortable with as opposed to what the Word of God says. The Word of God is where the power is. The Word of God is where the hope is. And if we just rely on "that's the way we've always done it," we're one step removed from the Word of God, aren't we? Then we can't plug into that power source. We can't find that hope. We can't find that comfort, because we're staying away from it. I think the Lord our God would tell us today just as certainly as he did that day, that is foolish. Get into where the hope and the power is because that's exactly what happened to these guys.

It says "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets," Jesus explained to them why all this had to happen. Their response to all this, like I already mentioned, when Jesus disappears after he starts to distribute the evening meal isn't "Can you believe we just saw Jesus?" It's, "Weren't our hearts burning within us as he opened Scripture to us?" You see the power that is the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit works through the means of

grace, through the Word and the Sacraments. He opens our eyes to see what we could never see. He gives us the gifts we could never get for ourselves. The more we are in the Word, the more we are going to find those blessings.

If we think about this, part of us probably wishes we knew what passages Jesus talked about. What did he talk about from Moses? What did he talk about from the Prophets? Why didn't God record that for us? That would be helpful. Why do you think the Lord didn't record that for us? Why do you think the Holy Spirit didn't have Luke write that? I think the answer is kind of obvious. It's because the Lord wants us to get ourselves into Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms and get into the Old Testament and see all these pictures, and then look at the New Testament and see the fulfillment. See what God thinks about sin as you look in the Old Testament and you see these blood sacrifices again and again and again and you see how God describes his feelings towards sin. You know it's not something we can make up and fix ourselves. So then you dig into the Old Testament more and you see his promises that he would do it all. He would be the Lord our righteousness, as he says in Jeremiah. Then that's what we rejoice in...that Jesus came. Think about all those times when we have despised God's Word and not made use of it and not used it fully and faithfully and we're comfortable with being lazy and just staying back with "that's the way we've always done it. I don't need to think about God's Word."

Christ is perfect in all those places. He dug into the Word. He handled the Word the way God wants it to be handled by each one of us. He did it in our place to be our righteousness. Then he died as the punishment for our sins and took all of our sins away. That love that God has for us, that love that is so amazing is what moves us to focus on God and on Jesus, not on ourselves. That's hard for us to do at times, isn't it?

I have to believe it's going to be hard for us to commune this morning because we are doing something new and different. We aren't coming to the altar. We aren't doing it the way we've always done it. Now we are going to be doing it standing down here. It's going to be hard. We might think, "What if I stand in the wrong place or go in the wrong direction?" If you do, so what? Just get up here somehow and we'll figure it out as we go. We'll get better at it with practice, right?

As a kid, that was one of my biggest worries. I didn't want to be the first person at the table that had to come back down from our altar because I was afraid I'd turn the wrong way or go in the wrong direction and make a mistake and look like a fool in the front of church. Now I do it for a living.

The point is, don't worry about yourself as much as you worry about Jesus, right? Why are we coming to the Lord's Supper? It's because we need his forgiveness. Our Lord knows that we need to have it more than just from hearing it from someone, so he gives it to us in this tangible way, the very body and blood in, with and under the bread and the wine that we taste, we touch, we smell. Everyone of our senses then can see our God loves us. Our God forgives us. Our God takes away our sins. Our hearts then

burn within us because God's love for us overpowers all of our weaknesses, all of our failings, all of our frailties. That's what gives us hope. It's not from inside of us. It's from our God.

So focus on Christ. Focus on his Word. Don't make it just a Sunday thing. Make it a daily thing. Find time for the Word. It doesn't have to be a lot, but find time for the Word so that the Spirit can open your eyes so that you're heart can burn, in a good way.