

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 24 : 30-40

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. We continue to read Luke chapter 24. Today, we read from verse 30 to verse 40.

Yesterday we read that these two disciples and Jesus arrived at Emmaus. Because along the way Jesus explained the Scriptures to them, they listened with great interest, and they constrained Jesus to stay and abide with them. As a result, Jesus went in to stay with them. This is actually very beautiful. Every time we encounter Christ, the final result is that Christ abides with us. How willing Christ is to abide with each one of us; it is only that too often, there is no room in our hearts prepared for Him. If we are willing to ask Him to stay, He is actually very willing.

Verse 30: "Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them."

Usually, breaking the bread and giving the bread are things the host does. Yet Jesus was the guest, the One whom these two disciples had constrained to stay. When it came time to eat, Jesus, though a guest, took the place of the host. He took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. If every time we encounter Christ, the result is that we allow Christ to be Lord, then Christ will break the bread. Do you still remember that at the Last Supper, when Jesus was with the disciples, He took bread, broke it, and said, "This is My body which is given for you." Then Jesus gave the bread to the disciples. At that evening meal in Emmaus, Jesus did exactly the same thing.

Verse 31: "Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight."

Many times, we encounter Christ, yet we do not know Christ, because our understanding of the cross of Christ is not deep enough. Once we know that the body of Jesus Christ, like bread, was personally broken for us and given to us, then in such a subjective experience, we will immediately come to know Christ. It was just like these two disciples: they had talked with Jesus for an entire afternoon but did not recognize Him. Yet when they were eating dinner, at the moment Jesus broke the bread, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus.

Suddenly Jesus disappeared. Jesus is very humorous. When they were weak, fallen, and did not know Him, Jesus walked with them, and Jesus explained the Scriptures to them. Once they recognized Jesus, Jesus disappeared. His physical presence disappeared, but His hidden presence remained all along.

It seems that from this time, Jesus began to train His disciples to become accustomed to His hidden presence. During the past three and a half years, in His earthly ministry, He had been with the disciples in a physical body. After He died and rose again, what He had was a spiritual body. He could be with them physically, and He could also be with them in a hidden way. Once we have a subjective experience and recognize Jesus, Jesus changes into His hidden presence.

Verse 32: “And they said to one another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?’”

Actually, the feeling in our hearts is the most real and cannot be deceived. They remembered that although they had not recognized Jesus along the way, when Jesus explained the Scriptures to them, their hearts were burning within them. Many times, when we read the Bible and are deeply moved inwardly, it is actually the same as with the two disciples going to Emmaus: God is explaining the Scriptures to us through the Holy Spirit. This kind of knowing is no longer merely a literal knowing, nor is it merely a doctrinal knowing of the Bible. Rather, in a subjective experience, God’s word becomes the power within our hearts and the source of burning within us. In this way, we are able to truly follow Christ.

Verse 33: “So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,”

This is very special. They had just walked two and a half hours from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Then, when Jesus broke the bread at dinner, they recognized that it was the Lord Jesus Christ. Once they came to know the Lord Jesus Christ, action immediately followed. What action? They rose up at once and returned to Jerusalem, because this was Christ’s command. Many times, we feel that it is not easy to follow Jesus. We may even feel that we have no way to follow many of the teachings in the Bible. This is because we do not know Christ; we have not found Christ in God’s word. Therefore, following Him becomes very difficult and often becomes a burden.

If, like these two disciples, we know Christ subjectively and experientially, and we feel that every time we read the Bible, when the Holy Spirit explains the Scriptures to us, our hearts are burning, and furthermore, from the Scriptures we recognize the sacrificial love of Jesus and the redemption of the cross, then we clearly understand that every word is Christ speaking to us. In this way, following the Lord becomes a light and easy matter. They had just walked two and a half hours to Emmaus; immediately they rose up and walked another two and a half hours back to Jerusalem.

“They returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together.” It seems that Jesus accompanying the two disciples on the way to Emmaus was a continuation of the whole gathering in Jerusalem. As soon as they returned, they immediately joined the original gathering of Jesus’ disciples. What were they gathered together discussing?

Verse 34: “saying, ‘The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’”

In the morning, the Lord had first appeared to Mary Magdalene. Through Mary Magdalene’s proclamation, the disciples seemed to be half believing and half doubting. But now, when these two returned and met with the disciples, what they

heard was: the Lord not only had risen, but the Lord had already appeared to Simon Peter.

When exactly did God appear to Simon? The four Gospels do not clearly record it. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:5, also mentions once again that after Jesus was resurrected, He appeared to Peter. After the Lord Jesus was resurrected, He first appeared through the angels to the women and asked them to go and tell His disciples and Peter that He had risen.

This Peter was the one who, three days earlier, had strongly testified to Jesus, saying, “Even if all are made to stumble, even if I have to die with You, I am willing.” This was the Peter who was full of courage. As a result, Jesus said to him, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.” Sure enough, just as Jesus had said, Peter denied the Lord three times. After the rooster crowed twice, Jesus and Peter looked at each other, and Peter went out and wept bitterly, utterly discouraged.

This failed Peter, this discouraged Peter, seems to have been especially remembered and cared for by the Lord Jesus after His resurrection. First, through the angels, He told Peter that He had risen. Then, during that very busy first day after His resurrection, He still made time to meet with Peter privately. This private meeting is mentioned only here, and also in 1 Corinthians. Peter himself did not speak about it.

I think this was God’s special grace to Peter. Perhaps Peter also regarded it as most precious, and so he deeply hid it in his heart. It is like Paul’s experience of being caught up to the third heaven; he also kept it hidden for fourteen years and did not speak of it. Later, when he had to speak of it, he still did not tell the contents of it. Every person who follows the Lord should have a specially intimate experience with the Lord. This does not need to be told to others. It is an intimate secret between that person and the Lord.

Verse 35: “And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.”

We can imagine that this was a very joyful gathering. Just three days earlier, on Friday, they had seen the Lord whom they loved crucified on the cross, finally breathe His last, and be placed in the tomb. Three days later, the Lord whom they loved had risen. At this time, regarding the words the Lord Jesus had spoken before, they now all had subjective and personal experience. Just as everyone was very joyful, each one speaking and recounting what had happened—

Verse 36: “Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, ‘Peace to you.’”

Luke’s description here is very vivid, as though he himself were present at the scene. Therefore, some Bible commentators believe that of the two disciples going to Emmaus, one was Cleopas, and the other may have been Luke. It seems that God wanted the two disciples who had gone to Emmaus, after they returned and gathered with all the disciples, to experience Jesus eagerly appearing in their midst. Jesus stood among them, and the first words He spoke were, “Peace to you.” Today, for every one of us who is willing to follow the Lord, when His presence comes, it brings peace. Perhaps our environment is not abundant; perhaps we still have difficulties. But every time He comes, He brings peace. Whenever we enjoy the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and His grace, the expression that comes after enjoying grace is peace.

Verse 37: “But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.”

Because up to this point, only a few disciples had truly seen Jesus with their own eyes; the others had only heard about it. Once Jesus personally came into their midst, they were afraid and thought they had seen a ghost.

Verses 38-39: “And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.’”

When the disciples were gathered together, Jesus personally appeared to them and showed them His hands and His feet, and allowed them to touch Him. This was to prove that the resurrection of Jesus was a bodily resurrection.

Verse 40: “When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.”

At that time, not one word that Jesus had spoken to them fell to the ground. Jesus said He would rise, and He rose. In the same way, today, the words He has recorded in the Bible will not fail, not even one. We truly need to learn how to read the Bible and completely believe according to the promises of Scripture. This should not only be belief in words and doctrines; even more, in our subjective experience, we need to know that Christ has indeed risen. Not only has He risen, but today He is still with us.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You! This great joyful news of Your resurrection was not only something shown to the disciples two thousand years ago; even more, today You live in the hearts of every child who believes in You. Let us hold fast to this assurance and live each day in Your presence and with Your companionship. May our daily life be full of peace and full of joy. Thank You for Your blessing! We pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.