

Equip OCC Class # 2 Devotional | Hermeneutics | Pastor Zack Beck

Luke 24:13-35

Day 1: Eyes Kept from Seeing

Scripture Focus: Luke 24:13-16

"That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him."

Reflection

The disciples on the road to Emmaus had witnessed Jesus' ministry, heard His teachings, and seen His miracles. Yet when the risen Christ walked beside them, they couldn't recognize Him. Their preconceptions about what the Messiah should be (a political deliverer who would overthrow Rome) blinded them to who He actually was.

How often do we approach Scripture with our own agenda, looking for confirmation of what we already believe rather than discovering what God actually said? We come to the Bible seeking the Jesus we want rather than the Jesus who is.

The disciples' sadness reveals their limited understanding. They "had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel" (v. 21), but their definition of redemption was too small. They were thinking earthly kingdom; God was planning eternal salvation.

Application Questions

1. What preconceptions about Jesus or Scripture might be keeping your "eyes from seeing"?
Consider areas where you might be eisegeting (reading your ideas into the text) rather than exegeting (drawing out what the text actually means).
2. Where in your life are you disappointed because God didn't meet your expectations, rather than examining whether your expectations align with His revealed will?
3. How might your cultural context or personal preferences be influencing how you read Scripture?

Prayer Focus

Lord Jesus, like the disciples on the Emmaus road, I confess that I sometimes approach Your Word with my own agenda rather than a humble heart. Open my eyes to see You as You truly are, not as I want You to be. Help me to come to Scripture as a student, not a master. Give me

the humility to let Your Word challenge my preconceptions and correct my misunderstandings. Amen.

Practical Exercise

Choose a familiar Bible passage that you have always interpreted a certain way. Before reading it today, pray for fresh eyes. Then read it slowly, asking: "What is this passage actually saying?" rather than "How does this confirm what I already believe?" Write down any new insights or questions that arise.

Day 2: The Heart of the Matter

Scripture Focus: Luke 24:17-24

"And he said to them, 'What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?' And they stood still, looking sad."

Reflection

Jesus asked the disciples a simple question: "What are you discussing?" Yet this question revealed the state of their hearts. They were confused, disappointed, and hopeless. Their conversation centered on their dashed expectations and incomplete understanding.

Notice how thoroughly they knew the facts. They could recount the events accurately: Jesus was crucified, the tomb was found empty, the women saw angels, some disciples verified the empty tomb. They had all the information but missed the meaning.

This is the difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus. The disciples had detailed knowledge but lacked understanding. They knew the events but missed the story. They had information without interpretation.

When Jesus asks us about our "conversations" (our inner dialogues, our discussions with others, our mental preoccupations) what does He discover? Are we processing life through the lens of Scripture's grand narrative, or are we trapped in smaller stories that lead to disappointment?

Application Questions

1. If Jesus asked you today, "What are you discussing in your heart?" what would your honest answer be?
What occupies your thoughts and conversations? How much of your mental energy is spent processing life through Scripture's lens versus your own limited perspective?
2. Where do you see the difference between having biblical information and having biblical understanding in your own life?

3. What "facts" about your current circumstances are you processing correctly, but perhaps missing the deeper meaning or purpose God might have?

Prayer Focus

Jesus, You see into my heart and know my thoughts before I speak them. I confess that I often get caught up in the immediate circumstances of life and lose sight of Your greater purposes. Help me to process my experiences through the truth of Your Word rather than through fear, disappointment, or limited understanding. Teach me to see beyond the facts to the meaning You intend. Amen.

Practical Exercise

Journal about a current situation that's causing you anxiety or confusion. Write down the "facts" as you see them. Then spend time in prayer asking God to help you see this situation through the lens of Scripture's grand narrative. How might this circumstance fit into God's larger story of redemption and His work in your life?

Day 3: The Foolishness of Unbelief

Scripture Focus: Luke 24:25-27

"And he said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?' And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

Reflection

Jesus' words sting: "O foolish ones." But notice, He doesn't call them foolish for lacking intelligence. He calls them foolish for being "slow of heart to believe." This wasn't an intellectual problem; it was a heart problem.

The disciples had selective belief. They believed the parts of Scripture that fit their expectations but struggled with the parts that challenged them. They wanted a conquering Messiah but resisted a suffering Messiah, even though both were clearly taught in Scripture.

Jesus then does something remarkable. He doesn't perform a miracle to convince them. He doesn't call down angels or display divine power. Instead, He walks them through Scripture, showing how everything pointed to Him. This tells us something crucial: to know Jesus rightly, we must know Scripture rightly.

The phrase "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets" indicates Jesus gave them a comprehensive Bible study, connecting the dots from Genesis to Malachi. Every sacrifice, every prophecy, every king and priest and prophet: all pointed forward to Him.

This is the heart of proper biblical interpretation: seeing how all Scripture points to Jesus. The Old Testament is not just moral examples and historical accounts. It's the setup for God's greatest story of redemption through His Son.

Application Questions

1. Where are you tempted toward selective belief by accepting the parts of Scripture that comfort you while resisting the parts that challenge you?
2. How has understanding the Bible as one unified story about Jesus changed (or how might it change) your approach to reading Scripture?
3. What would change in your daily life if you truly believed that every page of Scripture ultimately points to Jesus and His work of redemption?

Prayer Focus

Lord, forgive me for the times I've been "slow of heart to believe." Help me to embrace all of Your Word, not just the parts that align with my preferences. Open my understanding to see how every part of Scripture points to Jesus. Give me eyes to see the grand narrative of redemption woven throughout Your Word. Make my heart burn within me as I discover fresh truths about Christ in passages I've read many times before. Amen.

Practical Exercise

Choose an Old Testament story you're familiar with (David and Goliath, Abraham and Isaac, the Passover, etc.). Read it again, but this time ask: "How does this point to Jesus?" Look for connections to Christ's person and work. If you get stuck, consider consulting a study Bible or commentary to help you see the connections. Write down what you discover.

Day 4: Hearts That Burn

Scripture Focus: Luke 24:28-32

"When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?'"

Reflection

After the greatest Bible study in history, something beautiful happens. As Jesus breaks bread—perhaps echoing the Last Supper, certainly foreshadowing countless communion services to come—their eyes are opened. They finally recognize Him.

But notice what they say afterward: "Did not our hearts burn within us... while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Not just when they saw Him break bread, but while He was teaching them from Scripture. Their hearts were responding to truth before their minds fully grasped it.

This is the power of God's Word rightly understood. It doesn't just inform; it transforms. It doesn't just educate; it ignites. When we see Scripture as it was intended (as one grand story about Jesus) our hearts burn with recognition, worship, and love.

The disciples had been sad, confused, and hopeless. But understanding Scripture's true message changed everything. They immediately got up and walked seven miles back to Jerusalem to tell the others. Truth led to transformation, which led to mission.

This is what happens when we truly grasp the story of Scripture: we can't keep it to ourselves. Understanding that we're part of God's great redemptive story compels us to invite others into that same story.

Application Questions

1. When has your heart "burned within you" while reading or hearing Scripture? What was it about that moment that made God's Word come alive?
2. How does understanding that Scripture is fundamentally about Jesus (not about you, but for you) change your motivation for Bible study?
3. Like the disciples who immediately went to share their discovery, how is God calling you to share the story of Scripture with others?

Prayer Focus

Jesus, I long for my heart to burn within me as I read Your Word. Help me to approach Scripture not as a duty or obligation, but as an opportunity to encounter You. When I see how every part of the Bible points to Your love, sacrifice, and victory, let my heart respond with worship and wonder. Transform my understanding into action, my knowledge into mission. Use me to help others discover the joy of seeing their story within Your greater story. Amen.

Practical Exercise

Set aside extended time today for Bible reading. Not just a quick devotional, but time to really dig into a passage. Choose a section of Scripture and apply the method from the sermon:

1. **Observation:** What does the text actually say?
2. **Context:** How does it fit in the broader passage and biblical story?
3. **Interpretation:** What did this mean to the original audience?
4. **Application:** How does this apply to your life today?
5. **Transformation:** How is God calling you to change based on this truth?

Pay attention to how your heart responds as you study. Ask God to make His Word burn within you.

Day 5: Living the Story

Scripture Focus: Luke 24:33-35

"And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of bread."

Reflection

The transformation was immediate and dramatic. These disciples, who had been walking away from Jerusalem in defeat and confusion, now turned around and walked seven miles back in the darkness to share what they had learned. That's the power of understanding Scripture rightly, it compels action.

Notice they didn't say, "Great sermon, Jesus. Thanks for the Bible study. We'll see you next week." The truth they discovered changed their direction, literally and figuratively. They went from retreat to advance, from despair to declaration, from confusion to clarity.

This is what it means to live by the story of Scripture rather than just knowing about it. When we truly understand that:

- We are children of the King, not earning our place but invited by grace
- Our purpose is God's kingdom, not our own advancement
- Our suffering has meaning in God's redemptive plan
- Our story finds its significance within God's greater story

...everything changes. We stop living for the approval of others and start living for the glory of God. We stop being driven by fear and start being motivated by love. We stop seeing ourselves as the hero and start recognizing Jesus as the true protagonist.

The disciples' witness was simple but powerful: they told "what had happened on the road." Your testimony doesn't need to be complicated or eloquent. It just needs to be true. How has understanding Scripture's story changed your story?

Application Questions

1. How has this week's study changed your understanding of your role in God's story? Are you still trying to be the hero, or are you learning to find your identity as a supporting character in Jesus' story?
2. What immediate action is God calling you to take based on your growing understanding of Scripture? Like the disciples who "rose that same hour," what can't wait?
3. Who in your life needs to hear "what happened on the road"—how understanding Scripture's true message has impacted you?

Prayer Focus

Lord Jesus, as I conclude this devotional journey, I don't want to simply return to life as usual. Like the disciples on the Emmaus road, I want to be transformed by understanding Your Word rightly. Help me to live by the story of Scripture, not just believe in parts of it. Give me courage to reorder my priorities around Your kingdom rather than my own agenda. Show me how to share with others the joy of discovering their place in Your redemptive story. May my life reflect the truth that the Bible is about You, and therefore my story only makes sense when it's part of Your story. Amen.

Practical Exercise

Create a Personal Mission Statement: Based on your understanding of Scripture's grand narrative and your place within it, write a brief personal mission statement. Include:

- Your identity as God's child
- Your purpose in God's kingdom
- How you want to live differently because of what you've learned

Plan for Continued Growth: Commit to a regular practice of Bible study using sound interpretive principles. Choose a book of the Bible to study over the next month, applying the five-step method: Observation, Context, Interpretation, Application, Transformation.

Closing Reflection: The Continuing Journey

The road to Emmaus doesn't end with Luke 24. Jesus continues to walk with His people, opening the Scriptures and revealing Himself as the center of God's redemptive plan. The question for each of us is whether we'll learn to read His story the way He intended it to be read.

Remember:

- **The Bible is a story about Jesus that gives meaning to our lives**
- **We must discover authorial intent, not impose personal preference**
- **Context determines meaning**
- **Every part of Scripture ultimately points to Christ**
- **Understanding leads to transformation, which leads to mission**

Your chapter in God's story matters. Make it count for eternity.

"Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" - Luke 24:32