

Lesson 9

Third Sunday of Easter

The Holy Gospel: Luke 24:13–35

Mark referred to this incident just in passing, but Luke told the details about the two who left Jerusalem on the afternoon of Easter Sunday to walk seven miles to Emmaus. They evidently thought it was all over. Their high expectations regarding Jesus had not materialized. He had been crucified and buried. The women had reported finding the tomb empty and there was some nonsense (24:11) about seeing and hearing angels—but they had not seen Jesus. As they walked, they talked about the disappointing turn of events. In their depression, they were kept from even recognizing their risen Lord when He joined them and talked with them.

138. How did they express their disappointment and feelings of disillusionment?

The “stranger” forcefully began to explain to them that it was prophesied that the Christ would enter ____ by way of having to _____. (See John 12:23–33; 17:1, 5.) The Greek *edei* says clearly, “It was necessary!”

139. What made it necessary for the Christ to “suffer these things and enter into His glory”?

As they walked together, Jesus “interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” These two knew Moses and the Prophets but not in the way Jesus now opened these teachings up for them!

140. What was Jesus’ purpose in giving them this lengthy exposition of Scripture? In what way do we Christians today have an advantage over the first Christians in interpreting and understanding the Old Testament Scriptures?

As they neared Emmaus, the two practiced good Jewish hospitality and invited the interesting “stranger” to stay with them because it was almost evening.

141. As they sat at the table to eat supper, how did Jesus reveal Himself to them? What was their reaction when at last they knew that the women had been right, that Jesus is alive and it was He who had instructed them along the way?

142. Why did Jesus not stay with them for a time after they had recognized Him?

143. What can we learn from the experience of the two from Emmaus for our own Easter walk with the Lord?

The First Lesson: Acts 2:14a, 36–41

“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain” is a very formal statement heavy with significance and authority. For emphasis, the sentence begins with the Greek words translated “for certain.” “Let know” is an imperative. What Peter was commanding them became vibrant with Spirit-power when he added: “That God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified!” *Kurios*, “Lord,” was used in the Septuagint, the translation of the Old Testament’s Hebrew into Greek, for *Yahweh*, the “I AM” name by which God revealed Himself to the patriarchs and to Moses. Those who heard Peter recognized fully that he was identifying Jesus as their covenant Lord, *Yahweh*, in action to fulfill the covenant. *Christos* is the Greek equivalent of “Messiah.” Placing these titles ahead of “this Jesus whom you crucified” gives them added emphasis. Peter was boldly announcing that Jesus is the Anointed One, the promised Savior-King.

144. What had Peter pointed to that had fully established Jesus as Lord and Christ? (See 2:32–35; Romans 1:1–4.)

Peter’s “whom you crucified” impacted with strong judgment against the Jewish people for their unbelieving rejection of their Messiah.

145. What was the effect of this on those who heard Peter’s words? What keeps us from just putting *all* the blame for Jesus’ crucifixion on these Jews and their leaders? (See Acts 2:23; Matthew 20:28; 1 Peter 2:24.)

“Repent” called for a change of heart and mind, a turnaround in the whole direction of life. “Be baptized” sounded the first call to Christian Baptism, the first implementation of Jesus’ instruction in the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:19). Both Greek verbs are present imperatives, calling for a continuing thrust. This was Spirit-powered New Testament preaching. It urged people to do something that was beyond their spiritual capability, something that God Himself had to bring to effect in them. But in that very urging God’s Word was active—and God’s Word is always Spirit-power to make things happen! God engages us today with the same Spirit-powered Word.

146. In Jewish tradition, baptisms were for outsiders coming into the faith or for apostates returning to the faith. What, then, was Peter requiring of them with his call to be baptized “in the name of Jesus Christ”?

147. What blessings were promised to those who would repent and be baptized?

148. How extensive was the offer God was making through Peter?

149. What was the result of Peter's Spirit-powered preaching?

The number of people who received Christian Baptism on this occasion indicates something about the method used in baptizing them. The logistics involved in baptizing three thousand people in an area without a large body of water argue that the Jewish tradition of cleansing by pouring or sprinkling water on people was carried over into Christian Baptism.

150. How does this First Lesson tie in with today's Holy Gospel?

The Epistle for the Day: 1 Peter 1:17–25

Peter said our Father in heaven “judges impartially.” The Greek suggests being “without respect to a person's face”—not judging just by outward appearance, by “how one likes the looks” of someone. We are to “conduct [ourselves] with fear during the time of [our] exile”—being different from those who do not know and love and serve this impartial Father. Our outlook is to be one of reverence as we stand in awe of God as God and do not divide our allegiance (see Matthew 5:19–20, 23–24, 48; Galatians 6:7–10).

151. What do “foreknown before the foundation of the world” and “was made manifest in the last times” say about the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

A great majority of people in the world will say, “I believe in God.” The creation itself and man's inherent sense of moral responsibility testify to God's existence as the all-powerful and holy One to all but those who willfully choose to be atheists (see Romans 1:18–20; 2:14–15). Peter's “who through Him [Christ] are believers in God” takes us well beyond such natural knowledge of God.

152. What qualities of God were revealed in Christ that lead us beyond just acknowledging God's power and holiness to living with Him and for Him?

153. Peter told his readers that they had “purified your souls by your obedience to the truth.” What does “obedience to the truth” mean in this connection?

154. What was the result that gave evidence of what had taken place in these Christians?

When people are brought to obey the truth of God's love in Jesus Christ to the point of evidencing that truth in sincere brotherly and sisterly love for one another, Peter said that they even go beyond that to learn to practice agape love, in which they will love one another deeply from the heart.

155. How do we progress as Christians from a brotherly love for those who have become our brothers and sisters in Christ to a determined love for them that imitates God's own agape love?

156. What did Peter point to as the dynamic behind our being born again of imperishable seed?

Verses 24 and 25 call attention to different forms of God's Word, since the quotation from Isaiah is God's written Word, and the last part of verse 25 talks about God's spoken (preached) Word.

157. Which form of God's Gospel Word is to be preferred?