**Known in the Breaking of the Bread**

Based on [Luke 24:13-35](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk24.13-35)

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Third Sunday of Easter

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Today’s gospel account teaches how disciples come to believe or have faith and fellowship with God in Jesus Christ. First, faith comes by hearing the word of God. Second, faith welcomes those who teach God’s word. Third, faith is confirmed and given assurance in fellowship with Jesus among his disciples.

First, faith comes by hearing the word of God. On the day of his resurrection, two of Jesus’ disciples were on the road to a town called Emmaus. They were talking about how he had died at the hands of evil men and now were troubled. They were troubled with the thought that Jesus death proved he wasn’t the Christ come to redeem them. These disciples knew what Jesus had taught them; they even heard from the women rumours of his resurrection but they were slow to believe it.

Then Jesus came to them as a stranger and fellow traveler and, the Scripture says, “**their eyes were kept from recognizing him.**” Jesus joined them but they did not know it was him. And He says 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.**”

These disciples doubted the resurrection, and to build their faith Jesus teaches them the scriptures. He doesn’t use worldly proofs or earthly evidence. These disciples, they already knew the facts, Jesus died, he was buried, now the tomb is empty and some witnesses say he is alive. If Jesus wanted to simply prove to them he was alive, he could have revealed himself to them then and there. Or he could have used reason and said, “You know, that was a pretty big stone, it would have taken a lot to move it. And bodies don’t just disappear without a trace. I know it’s unlikely, but the most reasonable conclusion is that this Jesus fellow has risen from the dead. Also, you say some women all had the same vision of an angel who told them he is alive. These are trustworthy women, they wouldn’t lie to you. And perhaps if *one* Woman was distraught she might have imagined seeing an angel and had an hallucination. But it’s impossible to think several women would all hallucinate the same thing. From these facts, Watson, we can only deduce that this Jesus chap probably did rise from the dead. After all, once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth.”

Jesus does not overcome their doubt with worldly proofs, probabilities and likelihoods. He doesn’t entertain their doubts with a dose of healthy skepticism. Instead, he opens the scriptures. **He shows how all along--from the beginning through Moses and the prophets--God has foretold in the Scriptures that this is how the messiah would come.** He would be a suffering servant who would have to suffer all things, even death, before he would enter his glory and win the victory. And that’s exactly how Jesus came.

On the last day, the Son of man will come again in clouds of glory with angels attending and every eye will see him. The eyes of the righteous and the eyes of the wicked alike. And both faithful and unbelievers, both sheep and goats, both the redeemed and the condemned, *every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is lord.* Everyone. But *that* confession will do them no good…because it is a confession based on sight not on faith. To say Jesus is Lord because he looks like it is nothing special; to say Jesus is Lord because he fulfills the scriptures, that is faith.

God kept their eyes from recognizing Jesus. These two disciples didn’t *see* that it was Jesus who was talking to them. Neither were they persuaded by arguments and logical deductions that he had risen from the dead. They simply listened to the Word, listened to this stranger as he proclaimed to them what the dogmatic, authoritative, inerrant and inspired word of God had said about the messiah all along. And without seeing Jesus, only by hearing, Jesus refilled the oil in their lamp, and enlivened the faith that had been overcome by doubt and grief. Faith comes by hearing the word of God.

Second, faith welcomes those who teach the Scriptures. As they approached the town of Emmaus, Jesus acted as if he was going farther, but they urged him to stay with them. They still didn’t know that it was Jesus. All they knew was that, in the midst of their doubt and confusion, this stranger had taught them what God’s word had to say about the matter. And their hearts burned while he opened the scriptures to them. So they welcomed him, and urged him to stay with them.

Earlier in his ministry, Jesus said to the disciples whom he sent out to preach--“**Whoever hears you hears me, and whoever rejects you rejects me**.” When the scriptures are rightly taught, Jesus is the one who is teaching. These strangers didn’t see Jesus with their eyes, but it didn’t matter. They were disciples; their hearts heard and believed the scriptures as he taught them--stranger though he be.

Today, when ministers preach God’s word in its purity to men, God’s sheep hear it, believe it, appreciate it, and welcome the one who teaches as Jesus himself. Jesus says in Matthew 25, “**When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on His right and the goats on His left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, *I was a stranger and you welcomed me*…Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and took You in? And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of these the least of my brothers, you did it to me.”**

Beware of false prophets, false shepherds, those who come saying “I am he” but then bring you a different gospel than the one given in the scriptures. Do not welcome them or their teaching, mark and avoid them, have no fellowship with them and send them on their way as the devil himself. **But, when you welcome someone because they have opened the scriptures to you, know that you have welcomed Christ as a stranger, even as these disciples on the road to Emmaus in a literal way unknowingly welcomed Christ himself to abide with them.** Though he was a stranger they received his teaching, because he did not preach from himself--Christ though he was—he did not preach himself, he preached the Scriptures.

Third, faith is confirmed and given assurance in fellowship with Jesus among his disciples. Jesus, his true identity still hidden from them, was invited, and went in to stay with them at the end of their journey. **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. Later, in recalling this story to the other disciples they told them what had happened on the road, and how Jesus was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus taught them, though they did not see him, they believed his word. They welcomed him to stay with them, still a stranger, because he opened the scriptures to them. But they did not see that Jesus himself was with them until they broke bread with him.

Forty days later Jesus would bodily ascend into heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father, where he remains to this very day. And his disciples continued to worship him, and though they could not see him with their eyes he remained with them in the breaking of the bread. The scriptures describe how the church worshipped after Jesus ascended, “**And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”** (Acts 2:42)**.** What is this breaking of bread?

“**On the night in which he was betrayed Jesus took bread, and when he had broke it he gave it to his disciples and said, “Take, eat, This is my body given for you, do this in remembrance of me**.” When he instituted the Lord’s Supper Jesus commanded remembrance that this is a way he is to be made known among you.” For Jesus, though invisible, is made known to us, known to be with us, in the breaking of the bread.

The scriptures have taught us three things today. First, faith comes by hearing the word of God. Second, faith welcomes those who teach God’s word. Third, faith is confirmed and given assurance in fellowship with Jesus among his disciples.