

**Stay with Us | Luke 24:13-25**  
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## Introduction

### I. Jesus meets us on the road

#### Ia. The manner [How does Jesus meet us?]

##### *How does Jesus meet them?*

This passage has to do not only with *what* Jesus shares on the road but *how* he shares it.

##### How does Jesus meet them?

- he **draws near** to them (v. 17)
- he **walks alongside** them (v.17)
- he begins by **asking a question** and then **listening** to their response (v. 17)
- when he does speak at length (vv. 25-27)
  - he **does not** ignore their sadness and struggles -
  - **he speaks directly to their confusion** +

While they are walking together, Cleopas speaks for a total of seven verses while Jesus only speaks for three. That means 70% of the time it is *Cleopas* speaking.

All the language up until this point highlights movement.

- Verse 13, the disciples were “**going** to a village named Emmaus.
- Verse 15, Jesus “**drew near** and **went with them.**”

Then in verse 17, Jesus asks,

“What is this conversation that you are holding with each other **as you walk?**”

The very next thing sentence after Jesus asks this says,

“And **they stood still.**”

This is *significant* literary cue. Movement, movement, movement, Jesus speaks and they stop in their tracks. The risen Jesus, of course, already knew the answer. He asked it for their sake, not for his.

Jesus who went out ahead of his disciples to die and rise, now comes back to walk alongside them.

### *How can people meet Jesus through us?*

As the old saying goes: the medium *is* the message. *How* Jesus says what he says is equally important as *what* Jesus says. The pattern of drawing near, walking alongside, asking questions and listening is not a mere description of what Jesus did; it's a prescription, a model for us to follow when we engage with others in day-to-day life.

But drawing near, walking alongside, asking questions, carefully listening, telling the truth—that's just not how you *win* in this world. You win by outwitting, disparaging, speaking over, and speaking down. You win by shouting, and coercing, and conniving, and curating truth. You win by destroying, defeating, defrauding and defaming. In today's world, Jesus would make a terrible influencer; and that's one of the reasons that we need him so very much.

In our society, the idea of patience seems less like a virtue and more like a liability. On the rare occasion that it does make an appearance it feels like finding an old, unfamiliar relic 'from days long ago when things used to be civilized around here.'

Before I became a Christian, there seemed to me to be two kinds of Christians: **those who looked down on me like Pharisees** and **those walked alongside me as friends**. It was the ones who came as *friends* who transformed my life.

- It was those who came as friends, not religious salesmen or the self-righteous who entertained my quirky questions (“Genesis 1 is ridiculous, where are the dinosaurs!”).
- It was friends who walked alongside me on my own tumultuous seven-mile-road in my early twenties, and who led me to trust in Christ on road and to abide in Christ at the table.

None of them are influencers; and for that I thank God. The fact that everyday faithful friends exerted that level of life-changing influence on me, simply by walking alongside me, sharing truth with me, and leading to hope in Christ, means that all of us can do the same in the lives of others if we simply commit to walking in the way of the Lord in Luke 24.

If you really want to make an impact as a Christian, it’s not about how much you know, but how genuinely and radically you live out what you know. Action is the true apologetic. Engaging with others in this way, will stop them in their tracks because the medium will match the message; and from both the manner and the message will emanate dignity, beauty, hope, life, salvation, and the presence of Jesus himself.

## **Ib. The message [What does Jesus say?]**

### ***What does Cleopas say?***

In verses 18-24, Cleopas exhibits a lot of significant information about Jesus.

- He understands Jesus to have been “a prophet” who was crucified (v. 20).
- He had hoped that Jesus was “the one to redeem Israel” (v. 21).
- He reported that some of the women among them observed the empty tomb, and saw a vision of angels who claimed that Jesus was alive (vv. 22-24).

These are all true facts. And yet, they provide an incomplete understanding of the identity of Jesus. All the historical and human evidence in the world could only ever lead them us that far.

Notice the irony of verse 24. They report that,

“some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, **but him they did not see.**”

Cleopas says this to Jesus, the risen Lord, *who was literally standing right next to him*. As verse 16 told us earlier, the disciples “**were kept from recognizing him.**”

This is what happens when Jesus meets any traveler on the road, not just the disciples in Luke 24. **God must reveal himself to us. God must “draw near” to us and “walk along with us” so that** we might see him not through the eyes of human despair and confusion but through the eyes of gospel hope. **God must open our eyes.** And he does this by his Spirit and his Son, in his Word and through this Sacraments, on the road and at the table.

### 1b2. What does Jesus say?

In verses 25-27, Jesus interprets all Scripture through the lens of himself. This is a preposterous and, indeed, *blasphemous* thing to do—unless he really is God! What kind of things might Jesus have told them on the

road? Depending on when he joined them the journey took about three hours on foot at a normal walking pace.

- Did he teach them, as Romans 5 does, that he is the New Adam who recapitulates humanity from death to life.
- Or, that he, Jesus, is the great High Priest ‘in the order of Melchizedek’ who fulfills every priestly office and every Old covenant sacrifice through his once-for-all atoning death on the cross, as we learn about in the Book of Hebrews.
- Or, that he, Jesus, is the new Moses who leads an exodus, not out of slavery in Egypt but out of slavery to sin and death, passing not through the Red Sea but through the waters of baptism, as we discover in 1 Corinthians and 1 Peter?
- Did he bring back some of his teaching in John 6, where he— Jesus— is the new Manna, not like the bread the fathers ate in the wilderness and died, but the true living bread from heaven, and whoever eats this bread will live forever?
- Or that he, Jesus, is **the New Passover Lamb** who ‘takes away the sin of the world’ as we hear in John’s Gospel.

Who knows what exactly (or what else) Jesus said that day. But whatever it was, it had a major impact on the disciples because they report in verse 25,

“Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures *Meeting Jesus through a 10-year-old at Sacramental Prep*

It's a beautifully coherent message. But it can also be intimidating one to try to convey! Does a person require a PhD or some sort of Masterclass to be able to "draw near" and "walk alongside people" with the saving message of Christ?

I could imagine many people listening to what I just said and thinking,

'I could never naturally rehearse that sort of thing on the road, in the moment.'

Or,

'I just can't see myself walking up to someone and saying, don't you understand, Jesus is the new Melchizedek who recapitulated Adam's disobedience by his own salvific eschatological superabundant sacrificial obedience!'

And so, it's worth noting that core message is actually *much simpler*. It can be summed up by a prayer from an ancient liturgy of the early church,

"Dying he destroyed our death; rising he restored our life. Lord Jesus come in glory."

I experienced this recently during one of our sacramental prep classes. This is a class that we run every January for young children that teaches them about the cross, the resurrection, baptism, and Holy Communion.

It's an awesome time to connect with our youngest parishioners, and I always completely lose control of the room. I have a segment in it during which I have the students come up and I write their name on a sticky note and pronounce to them 'Jesus died for your sins, trust in him, cling to him, he is for *you*.'

This year I had completed the exercise with twenty or so students. I felt that it was a really meaningful time, and that I had really been able to genuinely walk alongside the kids to let them know the love of Christ.

As I was turning around to look at my notes, I noticed one child near the little wooden cross, sticking a post it to the cross. I said, 'Oh no did I forget to add your name.' And the little girl said, '**no you forgot to add *your* name.**' And then she stuck it to the cross, '**Jesus died for your sins too, and he won't leave you out.**'

I was so moved. I arrived that morning with a Master's degree, a PhD and decades of experience and training, longing to bring Jesus to a bunch of children; and a ten-year-old brought *me* closer to Jesus . . . and she didn't even need any to take out any student loans to do it!

Drawing near. Walking alongside, sharing about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These things do not rely on expertise; they rely on God's Spirit working through his word and sacrament, through the mature and through the children, on the road and at the table.

Transition: We've looked at how Jesus meets us on the road, in both the manner of his approach and the content of his message. Let's now turn from meeting Jesus on the road, to abiding with Jesus at the table.

## **II. Jesus abides with us at the table**

Ila. "Stay with us" [The urgent plea of invitation]

<sup>28</sup> So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, <sup>29</sup> but they urged him strongly, saying, "**Stay with us**, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So **he went in to stay with them.**

Notice the contrast,

- as they **drew near** to “the village to which they were going”
- they worried that **Jesus was “going farther.”**

They worried that Jesus was going

- beyond the village,
- beyond their house,
- beyond the premature hope of burning hearts set alight by the word of God.

Was it a fluke? A false glimmer of hope on the seven-mile road? A messianic mirage? A final lament for a dead prophet who we thought was the Christ?

Out of this longing arises the disciples issue an **a plea of urgent invitation: “stay with us!”** This must be the invitation of anyone who meets Jesus on the road. When you arrive at the house, will you let him keep going farther? Or will you strongly urge him, “Jesus, stay with me.”

Just as himself promised in

- **Mt. 28:20**  
“Behold, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age”
- **Heb. 3:13**  
“**I will never leave you** or forsake you.”
- **Psa. 23:4**  
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, **for you are with me**

When we sense him going farther on, it is fitting to cry “Jesus, stay with us”

And “so” it says in verse 29, “he went in to stay with them.”

IIb. “And he went in to stay with them” [The real presence]

- v. 31 – Jesus “took . . . blessed . . . broke . . . gave” the bread echoing the same words used in **the Feeding of the 5000 (9:16)** and **the Last Supper (22:19)**.
- Then in verse 31, “**their eyes were opened**” and they recognized him, and then he vanished from their sight.
  - We might be inclined to think of what follows as the moment of his sudden ‘real absence,’ but it is most assuredly the summit of his ‘real presence’ in the sacrament of Holy Communion.

We meet Jesus on the road, and our hearts burn within us as he opens the word for us; we abide with Jesus at the table as he opens our eyes through the breaking of bread.

## Conclusion

As a pastor and priest here at The Falls Church Anglican, I get the privilege, along with our lay eucharistic ministers to distribute Holy Communion to the congregation.

I recall serving communion to many that morning at the 6:15 and 11am services. I sensed a great eagerness in the congregation that morning. A longing that I felt in myself as well. As if we had just come off the long

road of Lent, arrived at the house, and were personally saying to the Lord, 'Stay with me, Jesus.'

One little boy, couldn't have been more than four years old, came up with his family. His mom instructed him to cross his hands on his chest to receive a blessing. Slowly the boy unfolded his hands and put them out, just like all the older kids and adults to receive 'the bread of heaven.' His mother quickly refolded his arms, and both she and I were smiling, finding it quite amusing. And then the little guy unfolded them again and confidently extended his hands, a second time.

Perhaps, he was just curious. Or maybe, he thought we were giving out free snacks! But I saw something more in that moment. I saw the longing of every human heart for communion with the living God. Maybe you are here today, partially closed off to God. Maybe you're seeking him, but wondering: is he really there, or is this all wishful thinking? Jesus Christ draws near to you, whether you come with crossed arms or extended hands. He offers to everyone the same gift by grace through faith—*himself*. His salvation, his real and personal presence, his deep and boundless peace. He alone will fulfill your every longing. And he says to you today and always, on the road and at the table, "**I will never leave you** or forsake you.

Let us pray.

Dying he destroyed our death; rising he restored our life. Lord Jesus come in glory. Amen.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) Why do you think Jesus begins with questions instead of immediately correcting the disciples?
- 2) What does it look like in your life to intentionally invite Jesus to “stay” with you? Are there areas where you tend to let Jesus “keep going” instead of welcoming him in?
- 3) What connection do you see between Scripture (the road) and Sacrament (the table)?
- 4) How can the *manner* and the *message* of Jesus work together in your life so that “the medium matches the message”?
- 5) The sermon emphasizes Jesus’ *real presence*. What does that mean to you personally? How does the teaching of Article 28 of the *39 Articles of Religion* enhance or challenge your thinking about the real presence of Jesus Christ in our lives and in Holy Communion in particular?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Article 28 – On the Lord’s Supper** – The Supper of the Lord is **not only a sign** of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; **but rather is a Sacrament** of our Redemption by Christ’s death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and **with faith**, receive the same, **the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ**; and likewise **the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ**.  
Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.  
The Body of Christ is **given, taken, and eaten**, in the Supper, **only after an heavenly and spiritual manner**. And **the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith**.  
The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was not by Christ’s ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.