

April 16, 2017 Sermon Discussion Guide

Rev. Steve DeNeff

“An Other Hope”

Gathering

“Lord, may this Scripture guide our discussion as well as our lives. Grant us the grace in the face of disappointment or pain to stay connected to the Scripture and the body of Christ.”

Psalm 119:105-112

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to guide my feet
and a light for my path.

¹⁰⁶ I've promised it once, and I'll promise it again:
I will obey your righteous regulations.

¹⁰⁷ I have suffered much, O Lord;
restore my life again as you promised.

¹⁰⁸ Lord, accept my offering of praise,
and teach me your regulations.

¹⁰⁹ My life constantly hangs in the balance,
but I will not stop obeying your instructions.

¹¹⁰ The wicked have set their traps for me,
but I will not turn from your commandments.

¹¹¹ Your laws are my treasure;
they are my heart's delight.

¹¹² I am determined to keep your decrees
to the very end.

Prayer

- For peace instead of violence in our world. *Lord, hear our prayer.*
- For the healing of children scarred by violence and war. *Lord, hear our prayer.*
- For connection to the Word and the body of Christ. *Lord, hear our prayer.*
- For the needs that we have shared together on a personal level,... *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Summary of the Sermon

- As a group, recall the key points of Pastor Steve's sermon.
- How did God stir you during the service? How were you challenged or changed?

Scripture

Take time to read aloud the Scripture preached. **Luke 24:13-36**

¹³ That same day two of Jesus' followers were walking to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things, Jesus himself suddenly came and began walking with them. ¹⁶ But God kept them from recognizing him.

¹⁷ He asked them, "What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?"

They stopped short, sadness written across their faces. ¹⁸ Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn't heard about all the things that have happened there the last few days."

¹⁹ "What things?" Jesus asked.

"The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth," they said. "He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. ²⁰ But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him. ²¹ We had hoped he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel. This all happened three days ago.

²² "Then some women from our group of his followers were at his tomb early this morning, and they came back with an amazing report. ²³ They said his body was missing, and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive! ²⁴ Some of our men ran out to see, and sure enough, his body was gone, just as the women had said."

²⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. ²⁶ Wasn't it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?" ²⁷ Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

²⁸ By this time they were nearing Emmaus and the end of their journey. Jesus acted as if he were going on, ²⁹ but they begged him, "Stay the night with us, since it is getting late." So he went home with them. ³⁰ As they sat down to eat, he took the bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And at that moment he disappeared!

³² They said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as he talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?" ³³ And within the hour they were on their way back to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples and the others who had gathered with them, ³⁴ who said, "The Lord has really risen! He appeared to Peter."

³⁵ Then the two from Emmaus told their story of how Jesus had appeared to them as they were walking along the road, and how they had recognized him as he was breaking the bread. ³⁶ And just as they were telling about it, Jesus himself was suddenly standing there among them. "Peace be with you," he said.

Major Sermon Discussion Points

- This passage happens in 3 movements:
 1. On the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus
 - The disciples were struggling with pain and grief on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus.
 - Jesus met them on the way but they did not recognize him.
 - Everything the disciples were saying about their circumstances were true, but there was something more to be revealed they couldn't see.
 2. At the home of the two disciples
 - There is a fragile moment in the face of hardship in which we can invite Jesus (or His representative) in or we can let them move on. Choose to let Jesus in.
 - It is here, through His actions, that Jesus revealed himself to His disciples.
 - They had been experiencing him and the revelation of the Word all along, but they hadn't seen it. ("our hearts burned within us")
 3. With the other disciples, back in Jerusalem
 - A primary way to get through pain, disappointment, and grief is to stay connected to the Scripture and the body of Christ.
 - This is where Jesus shows up and says, "Peace be with you."
- Do you find yourself in one of these places currently? Which one and why?

Next Steps/Moving Forward

- How are you regularly staying connected to the Scripture?
- How are you regularly staying connected to the body of Christ?
- Can you share a time when you were struggling and the Scripture and/or the body of Christ were comfort, strength, and support?

Closing Prayer

Pray as you feel led as a group following your discussion or pray the following prayer individually or together:

(from "By Faith" by Keith and Kristyn Getty)
*By faith we see the hand of God
In the light of creation's grand design
In the lives of those who prove His faithfulness
Who walk by faith and not by sight*

*We will stand as children of the promise
We will fix our eyes on Him our soul's reward
Till the race is finished and the work is done
We'll walk by faith and not by sight
Amen.*