

- *Easter Sunday*

Person who wrote it, knows it!

- You can tell a real expert - they make the hard to understand comprehensible!
 - Remember Carson lecture at New College!
- This phenomenon is especially true when its the originator of the idea or work that is talking about it!
 - David Mitchell and his Psalms lecture.
 - Robin Milner - Professor of obscure branch of CS!
- That's whats going on here - God, the author of Scripture and the plan of salvation, explaining it to the two folk on the road to Emmaus!

On the Road to Emmaus

- Wonderfully vivid account of the events of that first Easter:
 - imagine their situation: hearing about what the women had seen & Peter/John confirmed, the range of emotions - grief, joy, fear, excitement, confusion...
 - perhaps they'd "stayed over" in Jerusalem because of events, now heading home;
 - imagine their conversation as they walked - 2 hours, 7 miles, late afternoon;
 - *"Is it all over - were we wrong?" Puzzled, confused, unsure, nervous?*
- Then a stranger comes up behind them, walking alone, makes conversation...
- **"What you talking about?"**
 - (Jesus, as usual, getting people to think for themselves...)*
- Surely everyone knows what's been going on? Its the only talking point!
- Well, perhaps not, Jerusalem crowded with pilgrims, thousands there, suppose someone could have not heard....

Gospel According to Cleopas

- Brief, accurate summary of events of Jesus' life and of general understanding of who he was - but stunted!
- **"Prophet"** - limited perception! Perhaps Peter & 12 had obeyed Jesus' command not to tell anyone, or perhaps all the disciples were back-peddalling on their hopes having seen Jesus die - don't know.
 - *(Certainly they had hoped for more...)*
- End result is a limited understanding, a stunted Christ.
- Too often we suffer the same problem - a limited, stunted Christ.

Jesus' Response!

- Cuts right across politeness, expectations - 2 minutes earlier, he knew nothing of all of this! Now calling them "slow-coaches" for not understanding!
- Jesus goes for the jugular!
- What is the heart of their problem? Their comprehension of "Messiah" has blotted out reality - they need to check-out what they think with what God says through the Scriptures.
- Misconception of conquering king - cf Palm Sunday.
- But only part of the picture.
- So Jesus takes them back to the beginning... the expert, the author, explaining his own words, revealing himself, unpacking!
 - *(Many, many Biblical scholars who'd love to sit in on that conversation!!!)*
- Through whole range of Scripture!
 - Moses - Pentateuch - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
 - Prophets - pretty much everything else (technically not Psalms, Proverbs...)
 - but in popular usage whole of OT
- Picking up passages like Isaiah 53 and surrounding - **READ**

- Not just individual passages, proof-texts, but broad themes:
 - redemption at cost like Passover;
 - sacrifice for sins, repeated since imperfect; (Yom Kippur, day of Atonement)
 - etc.
- The Messiah's suffering was not the "end of the road" but the goal of God's plan!
- Its what Jesus later had to say to the Eleven et al at end of chapter 24:46.
- Same message as angels gave women in 24:7...
- Note how Jesus addresses their lack - Scripture, not his own words, since leaving...
- So always for us - Scripture, Scripture, Scripture...

Invite him in!

- Getting late; no street lights; don't journey further - come in!
- Their hearts were burning - sometimes, when God speaks, you can't ignore it!
- How many times have folk missed Jesus by not inviting him in?
 - into their lives...
 - into particular areas of our lives...
- Again Jesus changes the rules - he takes bread, gives thanks - normally host's job!
 - *(Probably Cleopas', & wife?, home...)*
- They not at last supper - not that, at least directly...
 - ...more likely his words or manner, his being host & Rabbi for so long, or just God's timing!
- They recognise him - and he's gone!
- Their confusion has turned to delight, to joy, to excitement - their eyes have been opened - and they want to tell the others!
- They want to share their joy - spontaneous, natural!
- **They were like that - just bursting to tell people!**
 - *(And shouldn't we be - good news to share!)*
- So they start back to Jerusalem - without finishing their meal!
 - 7 miles...

In Jerusalem

- So arrive - Eleven plus others gathered - nice to see started to believe Jesus had risen only once a man (Simon) had seen him!
- Excitement - but still little understanding here.
- "Thought you'd gone home?"
- Yes, well... you'll never believe it, but we met Jesus too!
- Ultimate in comic timing! Still out of puff from the journey... Jesus appears!
- It really, really is all real.
 - (and Jesus has same message - Messiah had to suffer - as before.)

Conclusion

- Spent some time reflecting on the events of that first Easter.
- What we've **NOT** done to any great extent is explored **WHY** Jesus had to rise...
 - why Paul in 1 Cor 15:14 says **"And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith!"**
- What we have done is peek over the shoulder of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, as Jesus pointed them to the necessity and the efficacy, the usefulness, of his death.
- We share with them an Easter faith:

– and that doesn't just mean a faith of resurrection, a faith of new life, of easily won life and cheap victories.

- No, our Easter faith also knows of the sufferings of Christ, not merely as an unparalleled example of God's love, nor our example in self-sacrifice, but as the sacrifice, the stripes, by which we are healed of our disease - the disease of sin & death & hell.
- **The Christ had to suffer - that we might live!**
- *Praise God!*