

Lake Shore Baptist Church Sermon

May 3, 2020 Charlie Fuller

Title: *Seeing, but Not Seeing*

Text: Luke 24:13-35

Those of us who are of a certain age will remember a tv program called *Candid Camera*. For the many of you who are not of a certain age, let me tell you how it worked. They did things that would probably get you sued nowadays. They actually did get sued at least once. They would place hidden cameras in strategic locations and play tricks on people. It was, in a way, the first reality tv series. It ran on and off on television from 1948 until 2014.

Imagine that we're watching a couple of guys walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus, about a seven-mile trip. Jesus walks up and is about to greet them. The words are there on his lips when he realizes they don't know who he is. He holds his tongue, wondering what they might say to him if they don't know who he is. If they don't know he's their crucified and resurrected teacher.

He plays dumb. "What 'cha been talking about?" he says. They must have looked at each other dumbfounded. "Where have you been the last week? Living in a cave? *Everybody* knows about what's been happening!" Jesus says, "Tell me what's been going on."

So, they tell him the story. Interestingly, here are two of the first evangelists, telling the story of Jesus to Jesus himself. They tell him about Jesus of Nazareth, the great teacher and healer. They tell him about how the chief priests and leaders had him executed on a Roman cross. They tell him about an empty tomb and the amazing women who first discovered it. They tell him about the men who validated the women's story.

Then Jesus responds, describing the message of the prophets and how everything they've described is a part of the teaching they've heard all their lives.

Yet, they still don't know it's Jesus.

As they approach the village, the unrecognized Jesus goes on ahead of them. It seems they've grown a bit fond of this guy or maybe they feel sorry for someone so incredibly uninformed. Either way they call out to him to join them. They want to make sure he's got dinner and a place to sleep.

So, they sit down for a meal. Who knows what all they had to eat. Maybe there was a little wine, some olives maybe. But there was bread. There was *always* bread.

And when Jesus blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to them, *they knew who he was*. It was Jesus. Their teacher. Their friend. The Messiah.

Last week we talked about *hearing*, but not *seeing*. Today we see that Jesus' own disciples *saw* but didn't *see*. How often is that true for us? How often is Jesus right there in front of us? Or walking beside us? Maybe sitting in the front seat of the car with us? And we just don't see him.

Where have you seen Jesus this week? Or maybe a better question is, where has Jesus been this week and you missed him? You were too busy or too distracted or too self-absorbed?

You never know where or when you'll see Jesus. Sometimes it's easy. In the smile of a child. The beauty of a field of bluebonnets. A kind word from a stranger. But oftentimes it's harder. Where do we see Jesus right now? How can we find Jesus in the midst of a coronavirus pandemic? Maybe our calling as Children of God is to help *others* see Jesus. *Maybe in helping others see Jesus, we find him ourselves.*

How can we help someone else see Jesus? Maybe by staying home. By protecting our community. By using the best scientific evidence to decide whether to go out or not, whether to gather or not. By wearing a mask and washing our hands to protect others in our community.

Maybe while you stay in, examine your own finances and look at how you might make gifts to help people in dire need. Maybe you could make a gift to places like the Central Texas Food Bank or Mission Waco or the Baylor Hunger Initiative. We've done a great job as a church already aiding Caritas feed people in need. People see Jesus when they get a meal they didn't think they would get or when a homeless person is taken in by a shelter.

People see Jesus when their phone rings and they see your name on the caller id. People see Jesus when a card comes in the mail with your return address. People see Jesus in emails sent just to see how someone is doing.

In this morning's text it says that when Jesus blessed and broke the bread, their eyes were opened and they recognized him. *The disciples saw Jesus when he broke the bread.*

This morning, just like the disciples that evening over dinner, may we see Jesus as we break bread together. May we see Jesus this morning as we celebrate the Supper together.

This morning as we're dispersed we will celebrate an alternative Supper with alternative elements. I've chosen toast and Dr. Pepper. We do this not to be flippant about the meal, but to emphasize our Baptist belief that the meal we take is symbolic. It doesn't matter what we use for the bread and the cup. What matters is our motivation to celebrate Christ's death, burial, and resurrection as we eat and drink.

If you haven't already gathered something to eat and drink this morning, you can do that now. But even more importantly, let's prepare our hearts to take the Supper as Cindy sings.

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Communion Text

Today we come to God's table, not my table, not your tables, not Lake Shore's table. We gather this morning at God's table and Christ is our host today. **All** are welcome at God's table.

We gather to remember and to share a meal in community. Through symbol we celebrate the mystery of God become human in Jesus as well as the power and mystery of the cross and the empty tomb.

[Words of Institution:]

[Bread:]

The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for^[a] you. Do this in remembrance of me."²⁵

[Cup:]

In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Please join me with your response to these ancient words of the church:

And so, in remembrance of God's mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died. Christ is Risen. Christ will come again.

Let's pray....

Benediction