

## Take A Walk With Jesus

Ever need those reminders to do something that you already know is good for you? Two of Jesus' disciples went for a walk on Easter afternoon, a walk that was really good for them because it would refocus and refresh their hope.

These two disciples were walking home from Jerusalem, headed to a town called **Emmaus**. They were physically and emotionally exhausted. **It had been a long and confusing week. As they walked along they were joined by a man who could sense their disappointment and asked what they were talking about.**

The question stopped Cleopas, one of the disciples, in his tracks. He was shocked that this man didn't know what had happened in Jerusalem. How could he not have heard! Everyone in Jerusalem was talking about Jesus and what had happened to him. Cleopas began explaining to this man, **"Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people"** (Luke 24:19). Jesus was like no one they had ever met or seen. It was like living during the days of the Old Testament prophets, but even better!

Jesus' preaching was powerful drawing tens of thousands of people to hear him.

The miracles he performed were absolutely amazing, casting out demons, healing the sick, raising the dead, calming storms, walking on water. **It was awesome!**

Cleopas confesses to the man with whom he walked, **"We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel"** (Luke 24:21). Cleopas and his fellow disciple had hoped that this Jesus of Nazareth was going to be the one who would restore the nation of Israel to the prominent position that they thought it deserved.

*With every miracle their hopes grew that Jesus was the one who was finally going to overthrow the Roman tyranny, and establish a kingdom on earth that would bring peace and prosperity to God's oppressed people, people like Cleopas.*

But all their hopes had seemed to come crashing down like a house of cards. Cleopas said, **"The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death and they crucified him"** (Luke 24:20). Their king was crucified. Their hopes for an earthly kingdom dashed. Now what? How could they have hope when the one they placed their hope in was dead? **Sure there were some women who had gone to the place where Jesus was buried and said that angels told them that Jesus was alive.** But that seemed like crazy talk. What was the likelihood of someone coming back from the dead? It just didn't make sense to them. So they started walking home disappointed and confused.

The man looked over at Cleopas and said, **"How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"** (Luke 24:25,26). And the risen Jesus, whose identity was hidden from these two men – the risen Jesus begins to walk with them through the Scriptures to refocus and refresh their hope.

And the hope Jesus gave to those disciples, is the hope that the living Jesus has given to you. **That hope was given before you even took your first steps, as someone carried you to a baptismal font.** Through water and God's powerful Word, the Holy Spirit created faith in your heart through which you received the hope that Christ came into this world to bring to all. On that day your walk with Jesus began, and you were given a sure hope that comes from what God has promised is yours – sins forgiven, child of God, heir of heaven.

This hope, this faith created in you is refreshed and renewed with your walks with Jesus.

Your receptions of Holy Communion.

Your reading of devotionals.

Your reading of Scriptures

Your participation in an ongoing Bible Study.

Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, Jesus has walked with you through the Scriptures, growing in your knowledge and understanding of your Savior-God.

You have discovered the source of suffering and sadness, frustration and fear, guilt and death – that the source is sin. Sin does create a truly hopeless situation for the sinner as the Bible announces, **“Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you” (Isaiah 59:2).**

Yes, God had every right to walk away from us.

But as you walked with Jesus through the Scriptures you have learned of the hope that only Jesus can provide to hopelessly lost sinners. It is the hope that the prophet Isaiah described when he pointed to Jesus and said, **“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).** Jesus came into the world not merely to walk beside us and cheer us on to live better lives. No! Jesus came to walk in our place.

While it may have appeared that the cross crushed any hope the disciples ever had, **but it was the cross takes us to the empty tomb of Easter to see a living Jesus. Jesus rises from the dead to announce that the eternally glorious life in heaven awaits you.**

Punishment from God has been replaced by peace with God; fear replaced with forgiveness.

That is the hope that Jesus gave to his disciples as he walked with them, the hope that Jesus has given to you because he lives!

**Jesus took them for a walk through the Scriptures to refocus and refresh their hope.** We also need those regular walks with Jesus through his Word, don't we?

Jesus not only knows where you are going, ***but he knows where you have been, and what you are going through right now.*** Let Jesus show you his perfect life, his innocent death, and his empty tomb all of which assure you that your sin is forgiven and you stand at peace with God.

**Let Jesus shape your hopes, dreams and ambitions, so that they may honor the one who was willing to give his life to make you his own.**

**Let Jesus comfort, encourage and strengthen you when your walk through this life may be confusing and hard.**

**Let Jesus regularly show you the hope of heaven that a living Jesus has given to you, so that your decisions may be one and relationships filled with people that encourage you along that road that leads to heaven.** Yes, taking those walks with Jesus are not only good, but they are necessary for our faith to stay refreshed and focused.

My hope for you is that you daily take those walks with Jesus. Walk with Jesus and have the living Jesus refocus and refresh your hope. Amen.