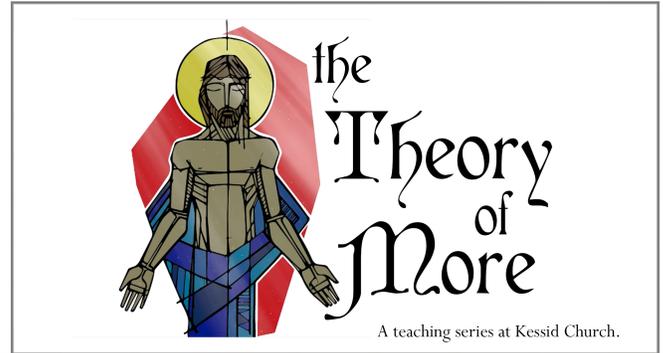


“THE ROAD TO HERE”
Date: April 17, 2022
Speaker: Danny Clinton



The Easter Story... (Vs) Luke 24:1-12

- This is the greatest story ever told!
- It's the story of Christ sacrificing His life to defeat darkness and death...

This is what's known throughout Christendom as... “The Good News or the Gospel”

Today, I'd like for us to be curious about where this story meets us...

- In a room like this I recognize, that even among the younger folks in the room, the road to here has been filled with unexpected corners and dead ends...
- Disappointments, Despair, maybe even some Disasters...
- Mix in the Good times or 'Straightaways' and, if you really allow yourself to think about it, even you are a bit surprised to have survived many of the crashes or breakdowns you've experienced along the way.

Today, I'd like to show you how this very Road to Here that we are all pondering about is the exact space the Gospel was meant to be experienced in...

- It's the space the Women on their way to the tomb experienced.
- Traveling there that morning, as they asked with great sadness... “Is this even real?”
- It's the space the Disciples would have been in within that upper room...
- Sitting with their heads in their hands... Thinking... “What am I supposed to do now?”

Another example happening alongside these would have been in a passage called... “The Road to Emmaus.”

- In the fourth resurrection appearance on Easter Sunday, two disciples of Jesus are leaving Jerusalem to go home to Emmaus after having travelled there for Passover.

(Vs) Luke 24:13-14 – “That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.”

In leaving Jerusalem, these disciples are perhaps the first to “fall away” from the faith...

- Along the way, they are discussing the suffering and death of Jesus... The word Luke uses for discussing actually translates to "tossing words"—they were arguing.
- They most certainly would have been trying to figure out the answers to the earlier questions... "Is this even real?" and "What are we to do now?"

(Vs) Luke 24:15-17 – While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad.

Jesus meets them, listens, and then asks them to explain what they have been pondering with one another...

- Notice: He didn't require them to change their emotional posture, or even recognize who He was... He just met them as they were, where they were...

(Vs) Luke 24:18-21A – Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered Him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered Him up to be condemned to death and crucified Him. ²¹ But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel..."

- Take note... That while talking about Jesus as they walk along, they no longer call him 'Son of God' or 'Messiah,' but instead, prophet.
- They are confessing their own doubts that Jesus was the Messiah...
- In other words, **"We thought Jesus would be more."**

Side Note: This is what this new series is all about...

- "The 'More' we all so desperately desire, that only Jesus can be."
- And, "The Theories of More" the world uses to try and replace Him.
- You see, too often we have been taught that God's love must be earned.
- That it's the pious and spiritually profound who have the attention of the Almighty.

But that's not what we see here at all!

- The Opposite actually!
- As the story continues, we see these two ex-followers of Jesus continue to share their disappointment in Jesus... To Jesus!

(Vs) Luke 24:21B-24 – "... Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³ and when they did not find His body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. ²⁴ 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."

At this point, Jesus convicts and then holds a small Bible study, explaining Scripture as they walk...

(Vs) Luke 24:25-27 – And He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory?” ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

- He shows how everything in scripture points to Himself and foretold the necessity of His suffering and death...
- Take Notice: No mention of them accepting this!
- The Story starts to conclude: (Vs) Luke 24:28 – “So, they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if He were going farther...”
- Look at how Jesus arrives with them where they wanted to be... Not where He wanted them to be!
- Also, that He was willing to continue on without them...
- What happens next is their choice!

It’s here... That the story changes up a bit...

(Vs) Luke 24:29-33A – ... 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. ³⁰ When He was at table with them, He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. And He vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem.

- **It’s a beautiful conclusion:** After all that time pouring out their hearts... They decide to invite Jesus into community with them...
- And it’s here... Upon the “breaking of the bread,” that their Spiritual Sight is restored, and they recognize Christ for who He is...

If we are being honest... A lot of people in this room find themselves somewhere on this Road to Emmaus...

- This is why I wanted to be curious about where the Easter Story meets each of us.

For the Non-Believers in the Room:

- You’ve tried the whole “Higher Power” thing... It didn’t work out...
- With great sadness, you might be asking... “Is this even real?”
- **Please Know** – “Jesus doesn’t require you to change a thing about your emotional posture, or even recognize who He is, to travel alongside you.”
- He will willingly meet you where you are as you are.

For the Believers in the Room:

- It's okay to confess that you thought Jesus would be more.
- You might be thinking, "What am I supposed to do now?"
- **Please Know** – "The 'More' you so desperately desire: only Jesus can be."

Speaking to Both...

Those who believe and those who do not:

- Jesus isn't dismayed by the direction you try to keep living your life!
- **Please Know** – "The entire time these wayward disciples shared with Jesus their feelings and frustrations, they were headed in the wrong direction."
- Stop trying to pretend there's anything you can do to escape the love of Christ...

Finally:

Please, please realize... Jesus has already arrived where you think you want to be...

- But He will not force His presence into your life...

Only, through invitation will He join you in community...

- What happens next is your choice!

MESSAGE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

PONDER

1. What about the message did I feel...
 - Inspired about?
 - Convicted by?
 - Sadness, grief, or loss about?
 - Curious about?
 - Hopeful for?

EXPERIENCE

2. Did anyone have a "Wow!" moment during the message that resonated in you? If so, what was it? (Could be a new scripture/Bible story you've never heard, a profound concept, etc.)

LEARN

3. What new/fresh thing did I learn about God? What new/fresh thing did I learn about myself?

APPLY

4. How can I challenge myself this week with what I've learned? What might responding well look like?