

Luke 24 – 13 – 35 The road to Emmaus

Recently many of us have been taking more exercise than before this crisis started.

Walking around the village or local area.

Maybe for some of us treading familiar footpaths and enjoying the places we always have enjoyed.

For other, we're walking those places for the first time or at least it has been a while since we were there on foot.

And what opportunities does this bring?

Taking things at a slower pace allows us to really look and see what is around us.

Houses we hadn't noticed before because we were driving and concentrating on the next junction or crossing.

Beautiful flowering plants and trees in people's gardens and in the open spaces.

Now, I'm not convinced that just because we are looking at these things, the whole world has not suddenly sprung into life just for our entertainment

and blessing but these wonderful things have been there all the time.

We have just become more conscious and more aware of our surroundings.

We just haven't been looking for them that closely.

I wonder, is it like that with Jesus sometimes?

This story tells us that two people are walking on the road to Emmaus.

They have seen what happened to Jesus, and they have heard these stories that he might be back, but they are obviously doubtful.

So doubtful, that they are not looking through the world with eyes that wanted to see Jesus.

So much so, that they were actually walking away from Jerusalem and even when he was walking with them, they didn't even notice who he was.

We hear the story now and maybe think they must have been pretty dense.

Who would miss it if Jesus were standing right next to them?

But the reality is that maybe a lot of us would.

For as much as we tend to see things when we are keeping a look out for them.

We can easily miss them if we are not.

I'm wondering if I had been on the road to Emmaus that day.

Would I have expected Jesus to be walking this dusty road, in the middle of nowhere?

Who would have imagined that possibility?

Perhaps we're not so different.

We miss Jesus a lot.

The Good news is that we don't have to go to find Him.

God is already doing incredible things where we are, every day.

And the real irony, is that sometimes those of us who think we get it.

Who think it's our job to show God and God's will to the people who we think have never seen Him, are the ones who are most apt to fail to see it ourselves.

When we look back on things, we can see that there were times when God felt so far away,
and yet He was never so close.

They're usually the times when everything was going wrong and we cried out,

"Where is God in this?"

and got,

so we thought,

no answer.

Not noticing the signs around us.

The little indications that God was at work.

If I had been looking for God in those who were walking my journey with me,

I could have seen that Jesus was walking with me in and through them.

And I'm not the only one.

You've probably had these moments too.

We sometimes teach ourselves not to expect what we think is unlikely.

We make assumptions and snap judgments without meaning to, and we miss the incredible reality of what is in front of us.

And if we do it in the day to day details of our lives, we do it more when it comes to God.

We tell ourselves not to expect the incredible.

Not to see the life changing.

Not to dare to believe in what is extraordinary.

Maybe it is our human nature.

We are more willing to be negative than we are positive.

We are more willing to disregard the fact that Jesus is walking next to us than we are to accept the truth that Jesus has been with us every step of the way.

When the two people got to the end of that road
with Jesus, they sat at a table with him.

They still didn't see.

They didn't see until he took bread, and broke it, and
gave it to them.

And finally it became too much to ignore.

They had to see Him.

Sometimes when have those moments too.

When it just becomes too much to ignore.

When our eyes are opened wide.

When we can't argue it away anymore, and we have
to believe.

And this current crisis is helping us to bring into focus
what is happening all around us on a daily basis.

People helping other people in a myriad ways.

Carrying one another's burdens.

Sharing one another's anxieties and worries.

And this opens our eyes to see the living God at work in the world through his people.

Those who had met Jesus on the Emmaus road went from that place and they told everyone what they saw.

They went to the disciples who had just had their own experience of seeing Jesus.

And together they shared the news that he was back.

The church today follows the same pattern even though we are dispersed at the moment.

That is our calling.

To share the news that Jesus is with us.

Telling one another about our daily journey with Christ.

Encouraging one another to look around and really see what is happening here in Peterborough and around the world.

We strengthen the church when we look around with eyes that are looking for Jesus.

When we look at the world through Jesus focused eyes, we find that we cannot help but see him all around us.

And then we can't keep it to ourselves any longer.

As we walk on our Emmaus roads may we dare to turn to those who are walking beside us physically, spiritually or virtually and look for Jesus in them.

Amen.