

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas
April 30, 2017

Meet Christ

Luke 24:13-27

24:13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,

24:14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

24:15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.

24:16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

24:17 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.

24:18 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?”

24:19 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,

24:20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

24:21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.

24:22 Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning,

24:23 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.

24:24 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.”

24:25 And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to

believe all that the prophets have spoken!

24:26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"

24:27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

1. Meet Christ

Two weeks ago, we celebrated Easter; however, the Easter season did not end. Easter still continues for forty days. According to Acts 1:3, "He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God." Jesus had been on the earth with his disciples for forty days after his Resurrection. That is why we celebrate these forty days as the Easter season.

Not only that but also, all 52 Sundays of a year is "Little Easter" since we celebrate Jesus Christ's Resurrection on every Sunday. Jewish people have kept the worship on Saturday as the Sabbath. However, Christians have kept worship and Lord's Supper on Sunday (Act 20:7 and 2 Corinthians 16:2) Why? Because Sunday is the day of Jesus Christ's Resurrection. Church decided to have the worship on Sundays, and it is the one of the objective evidences of Jesus Christ's Resurrection.

How do you feel when you greet Sundays every week? A Sunday might come to you when you are really exhausted from your busy week or you still have unsolved problems. When it is happening, you might think "that's why I don't want to go to church." However, it is why you should come to church and worship God. In Luke 5:31, Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who

are sick.” In Matthew 5:31, He also said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.” No matter how your load is heavy, you can drop the load, meet Lord of life who resurrected, and your exhausted body and wounded heart will be healed by him.

Jesus promised when he went back to heaven after forty days. In Matthew 28:20, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Have you ever experienced, when you went to a meeting but you couldn’t meet them because they forget the meeting or they have emergency etc. You might be disappointed for the situation. However, Jesus will not let you down. Jesus is very faithful to his promise. He will be there if you have faith in him. That’s why he is alive and meeting with us in the worships on Sundays.

2. Meet By Faith

But if we don’t have faith, we won’t be able to see Him and get to know Him. As Today’s Scripture shows, two disciples from Emmaus were the perfect example. Resurrected Jesus walked with them and talked to them, but they couldn’t recognize that He was Jesus.

The two disciples clearly had hope in Jesus and they were trying to follow Him enthusiastically. But they did not have the right knowledge of Him. Faith is not just knowledge. Faith needs humble attitude, repentance, honest heart and enthusiasm. But at the same time, you need to know Jesus correctly. According to verses 19-21, the two men called Jesus “a man who was a prophet mighty in deed” and “the one to redeem Israel”. For them, Jesus was no more than a man who could help Israel become independent from Rome. They did not understand that Jesus was the Son of God whose mission was to save

humans from sins.

In addition, even they heard that Jesus was alive from women and the tomb was empty and His body was gone from men who went to see the tomb, they did not think of resurrection of Jesus or try to check it. They thought “it has been three days since Jesus died. There was no use staying in Jerusalem” and they were returning to their village, departing from the rest of the disciples.

Jesus said to them “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!” (verse 25) But the reason why Jesus said “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe” to these men was not to scold or reject them. Rather, He wanted to teach them and guide them to meet Him. Jesus appeared in front of them to guide them to truth, give light to them and lead them to faith and send them back to Jerusalem where the disciples were, instead of letting them go back to their village without faith on resurrection.

Some people believe in Jesus immediately after they come to church, some of them say “I don’t get it” or “I cannot believe in Him”. But I am sure these people are trying hard to get to know Jesus or believe in Him. But in order for them to “understand” and “believe”, they need to be taught from the Bible just like these tow disciples. The knowledge of faith is not something obtainable by one’s efforts. As Jesus “interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (verse 27), we need to learn from those who have ability to teach the Bible.

3. Meet Through Truth

As verse 26 says, “Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer

these things and enter into his glory?” Jesus taught these two disciples about His Suffering and Glory.

The two disciples spoke about Jesus in verses 19-20. “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.” They recognized Jesus’ death only as “martyrdom.” His death, however, was more than martyrdom; His death was redemption for our sins. Jesus was crucified to open the way our sins would be forgiven. When Jesus interpreted the Bible to them, He must have referred to Isaiah 53:5-6, saying, “But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned — every one — to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Jesus taught them about the meaning of the Passion of Savior.

Jesus also interpreted the Glory of Christ from the Bible. The Glory of Christ is His Resurrection. The Bible gave us prophecy and testimony of Resurrection in addition to the Passion and death. If Jesus wasn’t raised, how could we be assured of His cross is the testimony of salvation and forgiveness? Without His resurrection, there’s no such salvation as the believers forgiven, received the eternal lives, and accepted as the children of God. According to Romans 4:25, it says, “(Christ) was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” People are led from sins to just, death to lives, and darkness to light through Jesus’ Cross and Resurrection.

The disciples from Emmaus encountered the Truth of Salvation and

realized that the one who talked to them, walked with them, and interpreted the Bible was Jesus Christ. People encounter the truth through the encounter with Jesus, and they encounter with Him through the encounter with the truth.

According to Acts 8:30-31, it describes one of the rulers of Ethiopia read Isaiah 53 on the horse car on the way back his country, and Philip asked him, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” Phillip interpreted to the ruler of Ethiopia and he was led to believe in Jesus Christ. As same as the ruler, many people have already met the Bible and verses, but haven’t yet understood the core truth of the Bible. They need the one who interpret the Bible. Jesus still interprets by Himself, but recently, He appoints someone like Phillip to speak about the Bible.

If you are seriously seeking for Jesus Christ, it is a very good start to call for the interpreter of the Bible. At the church, home, or Starbucks, and even through Skype, you can read the Bible and listen to the guide. Or if you have already met Jesus and been nourished by the Word of God, why don’t you act like Phillip to serve others to meet Jesus Christ? Do you want to be trained before doing it? Of course, you need the power from above as well as the training. Jesus will be with you and He Himself interpret the truth. Seek His presence and power and believe it. We shall help people hear the truth about Passion and Glory of Christ.

(Prayer)

Dear Father, You led us, foolish and slow of hearts, to Jesus Christ,

who is the Truth, through interpreting the Word of God. Please lead the people like those who are turning back Emmaus, or Ethiopia, to the encounter with Jesus Christ. For Your Will, let us be the ones could interpret the Word of God. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.