

Was it not necessary

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Third Sunday of Easter) is Luke 24:13-35. This text is about “On the Road to Emmaus.” This takes place on Easter afternoon or early evening.

Neither of these disciples understood the passion facts, so their conversation with “one another” needed input from another: Jesus himself. They were pretty zeroed in on their sadness about Jesus death. Much of that was really about Jesus not redeeming Israel (v. 21). The Messiah was thought of as the deliverer of Israel from Rome. They did not yet understand that the cross was the means of redemption. They were looking for the wrong kind of Savior.

Having the wrong mindset can happen to anyone including us. The idea that being a good person can help attain heaven for us has been around as long as the world is old. It fits so well with being successful in worldly status being achieved by hard work. The concept of pulling one’s self by our “own bootstraps” is as American as apple pie. With this way of thinking, there is little room for grace.

The women had reported that Jesus was not in the grave anymore and that some of the disciples had confirmed what the women had said. But even this did not lift their gloom. They were really stuck in their sadness. These two wayfarers were thus in the greatest spiritual distress and in imminent danger of sinking into the despondency which ends in despair. So Jesus comes to them, before He is revealed to the eleven. He does not break a bruised reed and a faintly burning wick he will not quench. (Is. 42:3) In evil days He is near to them that fear Him.

When Jesus says “*Was it not necessary,*” he is recalibrating their GPS because they had gone off of the right road. He does this by going back to Moses, meaning square one. Jesus was there at the beginning of it all. He was promised in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned. This is where God’s plan was revealed. It was constantly revealed all through the OT. Jesus was and is everywhere in the OT and obviously in all of Scripture.

When they pause, Jesus, though a guest, becomes host. To take, bless, break, and distribute bread ordinarily began a meal. This was not necessarily the Lord’s Supper, though the words and actions are reminiscent of the Supper, and by them Jesus is recognized as the crucified and risen Messiah.

The Lord gives us his Word so that our GPS can constantly be adjusted and brought in line with his saving Word. He also gives us himself in his Sacrament to continue to keep us focused on him and his plan for us.

Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide, For round us falls the eventide. O let Your Word, that saving light, Shine forth undimmed into the night.” Amen. (*LSB* 585:1) (TLSB