

Luke 24: 13-46: **Jesus Himself came up & walked along with them but they were kept from recognising Him.** In all the uncertainties, anxieties, despair and stresses of our, please note 3 aspects of the account in Luke 24 that may help today

- 1) **Lack of recognition:** of who Jesus is and what He is about. When Jesus Himself drew near and walked along with them, we're told, *They saw Him but were kept from recognising Him.* But somehow also, it had felt OK to continue their walking & OK to keep talking about all their hurt & their dashed hopes, their bewilderment and their fears. **He was a prophet so** people thought He would get rid of the Romans! As the two men recalled His betrayal and crucifixion, returning home from Jerusalem, their feet must have felt like lead...before this person comes alongside & walks with them, aware that He is really listening & understands..... then He explains from the Bible....helps them to understand....accepts offer to stay to share a meal with them. Only then recognised that Jesus had been there, though it had been very slow.
My main task as minister is about helping individuals become aware of God's presence and the power of His love; to meet with & know the living Lord Jesus Christ for themselves. Whatever the worst that has happened; & whatever we may feel, living Lord Jesus still comes alongside us, to reassure us of His love & His life. . . . For shattered disciples walking in wrong direction, Jesus came along side and walked with them. At first, He says nothing just listens...and today, Jesus may help us recognise His presence through our talking and opening up and listening, Bible study and our sharing, even if we cannot now physically come close or together.
- 2) Note the **phrase at start of v. 21: but we had hoped** ..hear the despair in those words – **but we had hoped**.....Think of your own personal disappointments – a broken romance, a job that just didn't materialise, the life of the person you love cut short, high hopes of a new minister or a new boss or of a friend – times when our expectations = been not let down slowly but = punctured / tyres blown out & hopes collapsed like a house of cards. Then, the empty tomb and the women's story of angels! The risen Christ had to help them to see how so much of the Old Testament and of what Jesus had taught pointed to the work of Christ on the cross.
But we had hoped....**We all** like to plan ahead & map out our futures on the basis of what we know; what we think we can do; what we think we can control and what we think is best. Just as well then that sometimes our plans don't work out exactly. None of us had hoped for or planned this lockdown time. But as we seek to trust Christ, know the living Lord will walk with us. *Because He lives, I can face tomorrow – Because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know He holds the future.*
- 3) **Jesus explained to them what was said about Himself in all the scriptures...prophets.** Few people today bother with other than a few favourite passages. To grow in faith, we must feed on God's word in the Bible.
How about **all the scriptures?** Isaiah chapter 53 is one key passage but Jesus fulfilled over 300 different prophecies spoken by different voices over 500 years, including 29 major prophecies fulfilled in a single day – the day He died –as well as His own teachings to disciples. **The Bible is not just a manual for life; it is also like a love letter from God that shows us how we can enter into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. It is no use studying the Bible if we never come to Jesus. Initially, they saw Him but they were kept from recognising Him.** May each of us recognise the living Lord Jesus Christ, wherever, whenever, for He still comes alongside us, walks in our shoes & longs for us to meet with Him. AMEN