

[00:00:00] Speaker A: Welcome to the Hope Church Glasgow Sunday podcast. We pray you encounter God's love afresh today. Find out more about us@hopechurchglasgow.org or find us on Facebook and Instagram. Now, please enjoy this week's podcast.

[00:00:17] Speaker B: So we're talking about the Emmaus Road. Well, if I, if I said that to you before we read it, most of you would have a good idea of what I'm talking about. So just, just for starters, hey, let's let somebody else do a bit of the work. What's the Emmaus Road all about? What's the primary message of this story?

Anybody, Anybody out there that knows who's ever read this before? Oh, you always get a deep answer from Simon, don't you?

You reveal the story of the Old Testament. Yeah, okay. All right. Anything else?

Anything more simple for the ordinary people here?

Wow, fantastic. Jesus is always walking with you and you don't even know it. Well, I thought I was going to get the simple answer of it. Was Jesus revealing himself after his resurrection to the disciples? I mean, that's what I thought you were going to say, but hey, ho, I'll work with what I've got.

So it's.

We tend to remember events in the Bible by the sequence of what happened or the people who are in it, because we remember at an informational level to our minds.

But what happens here? As John said, that Jesus got inside of these people and he changed them powerfully from the inside. They were motivated, they were on a mission, they were changed by. From people who were lost and hadn't a clue what was going on to people who were on fire for the love of God. And I just want to say is that's where we're trying to go this morning.

That's what we're about. That's where he wants to take us.

I would suggest to you this morning as we start this. Okay, so let's have a read of the scripture. We are in Luke 24. It's starting in verse 13. Now, that same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus came up and walked along with them, but they were kept from recognizing. He asked them, what are you discussing together as you walk along?

They stood still, their faces downcast.

One of them named Cleopas asked him, are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know what things have happened there in these days? What things Jesus asked about. No, he didn't. He asked about Jesus of Nazareth. They replied he was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.

The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death. And they crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went

to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They. They came and told us that they'd seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it, just as the women had said. But him they did not see.

Okay, I'll stop just there and we'll carry on from there. So for the sake of anybody who's listening, There was a blowing. There was a blowing of the nose there.

But you're back in, in the game.

Praise God. It's so good. You're so kind, so tolerant.

So actually I've changed the title of this.

Oh, I've changed it to what it says there. The. This is the three part love story. We're not going to call it the Emmaus Road because that's just kind of factual about where this took place, but this is about a love story because it's about, guys, the fact that Jesus walks with us and he walks in our confusion and he walks in our unbelief.

So let's just remind ourselves of the scene here. So this is two disciples. There's Cleopas is one. And it's always sort of put that this is two men walking along the road. In fact, some of the commentators says it might have been Cleopatra and his wife, which I kind of rather hope it was, that both men and women were represented in this. The women were very well represented in all the events of Jesus. And it's worth underlining.

So he was. Cleopas was probably one of the 70.

And I like that fact. It wasn't just the 11 remaining disciples that he appeared to. It wasn't the shiny people, it wasn't the leaders, it was everybody. Everybody is included in that in some way.

And it says, it's interesting, it says on the same day. I'd never seen this before. It was the same day as Jesus resurrection as they're walking from Jerusalem back to Emmaus. And the way it reads, of course, is that this was kind of towards the end of the day. So this might have been 4, 5, 6pm sort of returning in the afternoon.

And these disciples, I mean, they were disappointed, they were disheartened, their dreams had been shattered.

I mean, and really they got themselves into a place of despondency pretty darn quick, I think. I mean, if you think about it, the resurrection was supposed to have happened on the Sunday that was only this morning when. And who, who says it has to be morning? It could have, it could still have happened within the 24 hour period of this taking place. And, and they clearly hadn't got much of an idea of what to expect because they were talking about whole redeeming of Israel. Well, kind of, yes.

But the fact was, I mean, the kingdom of God was going to look rather differently than the whole nation in this moment, rising up in all of this.

So these guys, you know, I think I've said it before, I think they were lucky to get in the book, to be honest. I mean, but it's what Jesus does.

He takes those of us who are confused and that's where you are this morning. If life is like it is for these guys, that they were grieving, they were disappointed. If life is difficult, your dreams have been shattered, then this is for you and it's for me because it's for all of us.

And I think as I read it, it's beautiful that Jesus initiates this interaction.

You know, we think we're seeking him and pursuing Him. Well, you know, I've got news for you that he's pursuing us every bit as much as that, that if you don't bother doing this, but if you jump to Acts 10:41 and remember Luke that's wrote this Gospel, also wrote the book of Acts. It says in there, verse 31, he says Jesus was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen.

And I just think we kind of think that God's Jesus has come into our story. And I just want to put it to you, it's the other way around. We are in his story, we are in his purposes, we are in his plans, and we think we own this life of ours, when in fact it's something that's been gifted to us by him. And we're in his story. And this big story of humanity that is so beautiful and is indeed a love story and a beautiful, affectionate story that we're a part of.

And you know, he's pursuing us, we think we're pursuing God at times. And I tell you that's kind of true, but it's also true that he's pursuing Us in this wonderful way. He's the good shepherd. He's the one who's looking out for. He's the one who's the Father, who's looking out for the prodigal son. And he's looking to the horizon for you and I.

And God is never passive. He's always excited about us. He's always pursuing us.

He's, you know, sometimes we read that scripture of, you know, he left the 99 to pursue the 1. Oh, you know, that's for them, for those who don't know him. Absolutely true. So that makes me one of the 99 who gets left behind. No, no, no, no. That's just an imagery of the love that he has for everyone and of you and I included. And there's nobody who's not included in that.

And I put there. He comes alongside the disciples. He doesn't confront them. He doesn't come head on what you're doing, lads, in a wonderful Jewish way.

He doesn't confront them.

But more than that, he walks with them, doesn't he? He walks with them. He walks at their pace. He walks at your pace. He walks at my pace. He walks alongside us.

He does life with us. He's in what we're in.

And he loves us. And he's very honoring. You know, he's read that book, the Culture of Honor.

He really knows his stuff. You know, I was reading that scripture the other day that we are made in the image and the likeness of God.

And we always think of us as in the likeness of God.

But just think of it the other way around. Think of it from God's perspective. He sees us in the likeness of himself. He sees us in the image of himself. So he has a high view of you and I, a higher view than what we often have of ourselves, you know? You know, it's.

He's got a very high view. He's not the same view of you as he has as your cat and dog back home. He's got an incredible high view of you. And he comes alongside us. And I love this where he says he goes on.

And the nature of him is that he asks questions, doesn't he? He didn't say, look, these are the

facts, guys, can we not get this straight? I mean, I just think when you're on earth, Jesus, you really didn't explain this overly well to people. But because he's not trying to speak to our heads, he's trying to speak to our hearts, he's trying to speak to our spirits.

And that's what he wants to communicate with. He says in verse 17, he says, what are you discussing together as you walk along the road? And then in verse 19, what things have happened in Jerusalem? I mean, he wasn't seeking information.

It wasn't like he didn't know what had gone on. He was there at the time.

And it's sort of. So you ask yourself almost like the purpose of the question, because they were there, they knew, he knew, he knew that they knew. Well, why are we asking the question? Because what he wants to get to is the reality. What's the reality behind the reality? What's the spiritual reality behind the events that took place? That's what he's trying to bring out to them. That's what he's trying to get there on the table. And you know, asking questions is really just so important.

Just even in the way that we relate to one another, you know, you don't have to tell him, really. You know, you really should get that sorted out of your life. You know, just sometimes just asking questions and people and the way God does it, it reveals things.

Jan, she's the queen of asking questions. She's.

Which is great. Just every few months there's something that comes and lands in me. Oh yeah, oh yeah. I need, I need, yeah, I need, I need, I need that. I need to do this. I need to focus on that.

And if she's the queen of questions, then Ann over here, the queen of mentoring, she tells you mentoring is just about asking questions. Well, not just about asking questions, but it's a lot about asking questions and getting people to a place of self realization.

Just as a little aside, asking questions, you can go too far with it.

And I once had the experience of I was presenting some business plans in a marketing meeting and the kind of.

The big cheese, well, this is not supposed, excuse the pun, the big cheeses from Switzerland, Swiss cheeses, they came to this meeting and somebody, as I was presenting about what we were doing in these different disease areas and what have you said?

Asked me some question in the moment about, you know, in a very sort of Germanic way, why are you doing this over here with these people?

And it was in that moment where I foolishly, playing for time, asked a question.

I fully said, yeah, so why did you ask that question?

The reason I asked the question, Ian, was because I wanted to know the answer.

And you feel about this big, don't you, when things like that. So there are a limit to asking questions. But I don't think that's what was going on here. But the wonderful thing about Jesus is also, he listens to the disciples, doesn't he? I mean, he was the one with the knowledge and the understanding. But he listens to us. He listens to us. He listens. He asks us questions, and he

listens to us.

You know, even in their despair and in their unbelief, Jesus is listening to them. You know.

You know, people talk about, oh, we need to be authentic. I need to be real. Well, you do, and nobody's disputing that. But there's a point where Jesus wants to take us, and we'll see that in a minute. And it's a bit like in the psalms, you know, Jesus starts off Jesus. David often starts off with psalms that are in the place of despondency and despair. And, you know, you're thinking, how did this get in the book? And.

But it's always the case that eventually David says, but God.

And he takes it somewhere else. And he says, God is my source, God is my strength. God is my victory. God will bring me through.

God is the one who carries us into our destiny.

So, yeah, he listens to the disciples. He doesn't just dish out a list of directions, and he properly listens to him.

I'm not overly good at listening at times, and my wife has informed me of this fact on several occasions.

She has said to me in the past, you know, women have a sort of 50,000 words in a day that they need to get out, and men have only got around about 10,000.

She says, One of the reasons for that is that I have to repeat myself so many times.

We could reduce my word count if you did a bit more listening.

And she's also said of me before now, she's very astute. She says, I can tell, you know, when you listen to the beginning of what I've said, and then you drift off somewhere in the middle and you're glazing, and then right at the end, you pick up the last sentence, you think, ah, that would have been worth listening to. Could you say that again, please?

I'm sure you guys, none of you have ever had that experience whatsoever, but just listening, listening is a good thing, and I recommend it.

Top tip for marriages. Top tip for marriages. Don't just hear. Make sure you're a listener as well.

Good word. Says the brother at the front.

And put to. I love in this story that Jesus is completely unhurried.

He walks with them for a good few hours in this. You know, it's not like, come on, Jesus is Looking at his watch, saying, hang on a minute, I've got to be 30 minutes. I've got to go and reveal myself to some of these other disciples.

Can you not just get it, please? Quick, quick, quick. You know, which is kind of we are we men, shall we just say, a bit functional.

And we're not walking in quite the way that God wants us to.

And I mean, just in the context of that, there's that famous quote, isn't it? Hurry is not of the devil, it is the devil.

Because hurry doesn't give us that moment within it that we're tuned into God and we just need to have that consciousness of his presence. And when we're in a hurry, that's what kind of gets binned by and large, isn't it?

But I just want to say something a bit more than that here because I had this occasion, I know it was a couple of weeks ago, I rang this guy called John Clancy up. He's getting a lot of good press recently. He's doing really well, you might have heard of him.

And I was just sharing him a couple of things where pray for some people and seen some healings going on.

And this guy interrupts me, I'm thinking what I'm talking here. And he says, no, no, stop, stop, stop, stop. And I was like, okay, all right.

And he just said, he just catches the. So you said you did this and you prayed, God. Oh, that's incredible, God. I thank you, God, that this happened.

Praise his name. And he's kind of like, we have a little worship moment in the middle of this telephone conversation.

And I just thought, actually, that is really beautiful. I've learned something here is instead of just allowing something come to us, that is an encouragement that sort of comes to my mind.

There's actually something here that's gone at a heart level and that has actually captured more of the goodness of God and has touched a life changing moment rather than. It's just an encouragement. So that was, that was beautiful as well.

Okay, so there's only one page, so be encouraged.

We're moving on quickly with this.

And my second part of my three parts is Jesus challenges the unbelief. And there's a heart response because Jesus doesn't want to just leave them in this place of despair and despondency, much as he's willing to listen to them in these circumstances. So if I just read on, this is in Luke 24:25, it says he said to them, how foolish you are and how slow to believe all the Things that the prophets have spoken. Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

And if you read the commentaries on this, they talk about this foolishness that Jesus refers to. It's rather more folly, I think is the word that's used. Not a very common word in the English language, but it's rather folly rather than that of kind of deliberate sin that he's pointing out. And it's the foolishness not to come back to Scripture and to consider what the prophets had said and draw comfort from this truth and comfort from the destiny that Jesus promises to the disciples.

And he goes on verse 27, doesn't he says, and beginning with Moses and all the prophets and I mean, this is interesting, he refers to the entire sort of, kind of drift of the whole Old Testament. He starts with Moses that God gave them a leader. God, you know, took this million people out of Egypt. He took them out into the desert, he took them into the promised land, he took them through the waters, he took them to Jericho, and the nation came of it. And the whole point of

which the Messiah comes comes from this sort of lineage of these people.

And he's taking them sort of on that journey. And just saying is like the whole purpose of history is this Messiah, it looks forward to him, and we look back to him. This is the whole pinnacle and center point of history. And I'm just saying that this is what he's drawing their attention to. And it's again, for us, it's the point of attention that we need to focus on.

And then he says in verse 28, says, as they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther.

Jesus just messes with their heads. And they.

But they urged him strongly, stay with us. For it's nearly evening, the day is almost over. So he went to stay with them. So I just think like Jesus, I think he was trying to draw out a response from them that he says they pleaded with the stranger to stay with him. And you know, they showed hospitality and love and.

And the fact that they wanted to engage with God in this. And we're the same, you know, we need to, when we show hospitality even to one another, the love of God, the power of God is in those things. And you know, the kingdom of God is not always convenient. You know, we have to put ourselves out for the needs of one another, as indeed he did. And we've got this amazing thing then happens if we read on from there and it's a very simple meal that they have together. In verse 30, it says, he took bread, he gave thanks and he broke it. And he began sorry, and he began to give it to them. And there's a kind of fantastic sort of thing.

I'm sure it was a simple meal. He took bread. I mean, this is.

This is like the king of the universe, the maker of heaven and earth, sitting down and eating with a couple of disciples who clearly hadn't got much of an idea of what was going on. And there's a beautiful ordinariness of them breaking.

They were having the Jewish equivalent of beans on toast for tea with Jesus. I mean, it was.

It was utterly simple, utterly basic. It's utterly accessible to everyone.

That's the point that he took bread. I mean, he took bread in this moment.

He takes charge, he takes authority, and that's with us. He takes authority and he comes.

And as it says, he gives thanks. And what is he doing? He's recognizing that the Father is the great provider in this.

In this moment. What is the spiritual reality behind the reality of what we're looking at?

And he says he broke bread and he gave it to them all. There's a sense of unity here. There's a sense of family, just as we broke bread together. Sense of unity, of family, of oneness, of giving from God is what's taking place. And we share in the covenant meal. We're sharing in a meal that's given to us, given to us from God.

And then it says, then their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he disappeared from their sight. And like I was saying before, I love the ordinariness of the circumstance. This is the king of the maker of heaven and earth.

And there he is with people, ordinary people, eating ordinary food in an ordinary way in an ordinary little house. And we just, just. I just thank God that he's in our situation, you know. And the other thing too, is for the disciples, there was two of them together. There's. There's a fellowship for us in it of walking together not only with God in our circumstance, but we walk. We walk with one another, and we're not on our own. You're part of a family here.

And then in verse 13, he says, were not our hearts bold, burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us? You know, Jesus was excited their hearts. And for us, it's the same. Jesus excites our hearts. We have this tension of these two things is we're excited about what Jesus doing, and we're Also excited about what we're doing as a church.

But the primarily the thing that gets inside of us is Jesus himself. And he just, you know, he just transforms them, doesn't he?

And he comes at the deepest level to hearts and minds. He comes to the core of our being.

This is no kind of intellectual agreement. This is no appreciation of the theology in the moment. This is. They're energized, they're excited, they are motivated, they are transformed, they are filled with joy.

They didn't need any kind of pep talk to carry on.

They grasped that they had encountered God himself, they had encountered the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

And then lastly he says, they got up and we should have been moving this on, shouldn't we?

And he, As a result of this encounter, they got up, returned and went to Jerusalem. As I say, they were motivated, they were empowered, they were transformed. And they had a sense of urgency, they had a sense of mission.

They went back to the family of the church before it was born back in Jerusalem. They went back there and they were changed people. They'd gone from a confused people to having an encounter with God, to being an empowered people.

That kind of three stage process sums up what God gives us. That you might be facing some really tough times, but God comes alongside.

He comes with all the love and the graciousness and the kindness that we've talked about.

And yet within it, he comes with a degree of challenge and he wants to lift us up, to get his perspective on what we're facing.

And as a result of that encounter, we are excited, we're transformed in heart.

So I just want to close, I just want you to close your eyes and we'll close in these moments. So Steve, you'll be up for just coming and just playing for a minute.

Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, God. Okay.

Oh, Jesus, we thank you that you're here. You thank you that you're with us. Thank you that you

take us from our frustrations, you take us from our disappointments, you take us from our confusion.

And with all your wonderful love, Lord, you walk with us in all of those things, even, even when we don't know it, even when we don't realize that you're with us.

And you, Jesus, just lovingly bring us into an encounter with you in the context of family here. We just thank you that you give us this encounter and you turn lives around.

Just this morning, Lord, we want to say that we completely want to live in that truth, that you are the way you are the truth, you are the liar the life and Lord, we're just saying this Emmaus Road, it's not a historical story.

We know. It's a living invitation to encounter you. And we do that.

We encounter you this morning as we just wait on you a minute.

We say, bless you Lord. Just come. Come fill us up again.

Come fill us afresh. We pray.

[00:32:32] Speaker A: Thank you for listening to this podcast from Hope Church Glasgow. There are loads more to listen to wherever you normally find your podcasts or from our website@hopechurchglasgow.org if you'd like to know more about us, we are on Facebook and Instagram. Just search for Hope Church Glasgow. Have a hopeful day.