

Walk with Jesus

- Beautiful painting hung living room GGL's house. Of wooded scene; dirt path winding thru mid forest. On path, man white robe. At his side, 2 discs, going on WWJ. Pretty famous; many seen before. Depicts exactly what takes place in Gos: acct road Ems. Was after ES. That morn, J risen from dead, appeared MM & other women; that eve, J would appear discs behind locked doors (last sermon). But that after, 2 discs, heading for Ems, went on WWJ. And today, as see 2 discs WWJ, might learn thing/2 re own WWJ.
- **Vs. 13-16.** You know what these 2 talking re: how Teacher/Lord just been arrested, beaten, crucified, buried tomb; thought J dead/gone. But all sudden J joined them on road. So 3 them walking tog, but discs didn't realize: J.
- What I'd like you realize today: we're all WWJ. That's what means be Xian. By faith we trust in JC as Sav, risen from dead; so in faith we WWJ. Some you been WWJ short time; come believe somewhat recently. Others WWJ your entire life, since baptized; you've WWJ as worshiped at church, as studied God's Word at home, school, SS. And throughout life, J been w/u every step/way. Whether new to Xian faith or not, my encouragement for you: always WWJ. WWJ even when don't recognize he's there, because may be times in life when you (like 2 discs) feel like J gone or abandoned you. Someone you love dies of disease no one know how cure, like cancer or COVID-19; feel all alone. Or your financial footing falls out from beneath feet because economic collapse; feel helpless, abandoned by J – you don't recognize J w/u. But by faith you know: he's there. By faith, you know: J rose dead; and your remembered words: "Peace be with you; don't be afraid; stop doubting & believe." Don't ever think J's left you; don't ever fear he's abandoned you. Instead, WWJ. WWJ even when you feel like he's not walking w/u, because by faith you know he's there, and you know he always will be.
- So discs walking along; J joins; they don't realize him. **Vs. 17.** Litle stopped mid road, looked at J in shock. **Vs. 18b;** then **19a.** Surprising see J like this; he's playing dumb; acting like doesn't know what's going on! We know later he'll reveal true identity. But for now, **vs. 19a.** Clearly not seeking info, as if doesn't know what talking re. So what's he doing? I'll tell you what doing: he's encouraging these discs, urging them: talk to him, re concerns, share w/him what on minds, unload baggage – because J is interested, J does care, J will listen.
- And today J urges us do very same thing. As we walk road/life w/J, J invites us talk him re concerns, speak in prayer, share what's on minds, unload baggage. And you can bet that when Son/God makes this invitation: J is interested, does care, will listen. So as WWJ, also talk w/J! Major part of WWJ: life of prayer. Prayer to God not re fancy words, eloquent phrases. In fact, some people might even feel nervous re speaking to Almighty. But prayer simply talking God, from heart, & knowing listening. So as you WWJ, also talk w/J.
- J asks what talking re. And they: **vs. 19b-21a.** Hear hoplessness in words? They thought J dead/gone forever; confused, disappointed, hopeless; felt like their relationship w/J was now thing/past. And so beginning move on. You can tell by way use past tense: **was** prophet (not sure is anymore); **had hoped** he'd redeem Israel (not our hope anymore). Beginning to move on from J & see J as thing/past.
- We tend move on when something in life reaches a conclusion. Like baseball season; played last game; time move on. Or school yr; lot kids can't come school for rest this school year; time move on. That's what these discs doing w/J. He's dead; time move on. And you can see foolishness in that because you know J risen from dead. But sometimes we too tempted think J: as thing/past; as someone who was important us in childhood, earlier in life, but not important now anymore. Sometimes tempted think: those Bible lessons studied in SS, or Cat lessons studied w/pr, only meant for grade schoolers; and now time's come move on from J. That's how we're tempted! And if you doubt me on this, I can tell you re dozens people fallen from faith, moved on from J. Since childhood they've come church fewer times than fingers on hand. They were WWJ; but then made J thing/past.
- So as you WWJ, make sure J remains not only in your past, but also present/future – because it's true, **vs. 19c.** Everything you ever learned re J in past, all true: how calmed storms, fed 1000s, healed sick; died cross, rose dead. But now in present, J still calming storms, feeding 1000s, healing sick; still reminding people that did die cross, rise dead for them (include you!), so that someday in the future all believe (include you!) might be w/him forever in heaven. Jesus is your past, present, future. He's been walking w/u all along, is today, will continue walk w/u entire life. Don't move on from J or think he's only part your past. But every day, WWJ.
- So they're sharing their disappointments w/stranger (remember, still didn't know: J). And J: **vs. 25-27.** These discs: weak in faith; doubted resurrection. Like Tom (sermon last wk): wouldn't believe unless proof. But what comfort know: J still came these discs, even in their weakness, and patiently explained everything them.

- There are plenty times we weak in our faith, just like they were. We doubt J's: love; power; Word. Like Tom, we want proof before we'll bel. And that's a weakness on our part, of which we should be ashamed. But in love/patience J still comes us, even when faith weak – J so patient! Fathom for moment patience of Xp. He's done everything save us: shed blood, conquered Satan, given this salvation us as free gift/grace. And we have audacity say, "J, I'm not so sure I believe it's true." But J has patience say, "That's okay; let me explain this you."
- That's exactly what did for disc. **Vs. 27.** And I wish could've been there hear what had say! I'm sure if I could've heard words of J, that've made my weak faith strong. Wait minute – I do have words/J, so do you. J does speak us, maybe not in exactly same way did w/these discs. But J does still speak to you/me in his Word, in Scriptures. When we feel weak in faith, J takes us right back his Word/peace; there explains everything us. God's Word: foundation/father, so when we go back to God's Word every day again/again, when we return to God of God's grace thru Xp taught in Scripture for our salvation – that's how weak faith made strong.
- Finally make to Ems; **vs. 28-29a.** So J did. **Vs. 30.** This not HC, though kind of sounds like it; words pretty similar. They just hungry travelers, sitting down together evening meal. But during this COVID pandemic while cannot gather together worship, I just can't help but think (when hear this vs) re our hunger for gathering together. We long come back church, see one another, hear God's Word together, & take HC together, right here in own church. But can't, at least for now. So I pray this pandemic increase our appreciation for worshipping together, hearing God's Word & receiving sacrament together, here church.
- As eating this evening meal, suddenly **vs. 31.** Realized was him, then vanished thin air. But that was okay, because so excited & hearts burning within. So raced back Jerusalem tell others, "True! J is risen dead! We've seen!" They walked same path walked earlier w/J, only now were w/o J. Or were they, really w/o J? I submit to you: that J was w/them on their walk from Ems just as w/them on walk to Ems. Maybe couldn't see him; nevertheless, WWJ. Same true us: may not physically see J; but every day, as walk road/life (path Xian faith), we're indeed WWJ. That's what road to Ems is all about! J is risen dead! And even if you can't see him, by faith you know there; know: J walking w/u, beside you, never to leave you. My dear sis/bro in Xp, fellow believers in risen Lord/Savior, never stray from path Xian faith as you journey thru this life, but stay close to your Savior, & WWJ.

Luke 24:13-35

¹³Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

¹⁴They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶but they were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹"What things?" he asked.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹but 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. ²²In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."

²⁵He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

²⁸As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³²They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

³³They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.



The Road to Emmaus by Robert Zünd, 1877