

## “The Journey of Easter - Adjusting”

Scripture: Luke 24;13-35

Graphics: road, milestones, pivot, adjustment

Big Truth: The journey of Easter is a journey of death, new life, waiting, releasing, and being given new power. We often think that the journey is about the destination, but it's not. The journey changes us along the way. If we're intentional about the milestones and knowing more about Jesus on the journey of faith, His death, resurrection, adjusting, ascension, and Spirit all transform us into the faithful disciples we are called to be. This Lent, we will spend time in a process of death, rebirth, and being filled with His power. Then, at Holy Week, we will be ready for Him to Rise in us!

Focus Question: What needs to be adjusted in my life because of Jesus and his new life?

### 1. Introduction

- A. I've never been much of a basketball player for lots of reasons. Since we're on the verge of NCAA March Madness and in the thick of high school basketball playoffs, however, let's bring in some basketball to help us today.
- B. There's one key move in basketball that's essential to master, but sometimes gets overlooked.
- C. It's not the free throw or the jump shot or a good lay-up, as important as those are. It's not how to inbound, block a shot, or how to dribble, although that last one's pretty critical.
- D. Nope. **I'm talking about the pivot.** When a player is holding onto the ball, and is standing in one spot, really the only move they can make is to pivot on one foot. If you keep that one foot planted in the place it landed, you can pivot your entire body around that point - 360 degrees. The pivot is super-helpful to avoid the obstacle in your way, to block your opponent from the ball, and gives you a new view of your teammates...even opening up a shot that was otherwise blocked.
- E. The pivot allows you to change directions and any coach will tell you that you must master the art of the pivot. This is especially true when you get into trouble with the play you're trying to execute. Something got in your way. Something is blocking you. Things are different than what you envisioned. So you have to pivot.
- F. On this Journey of Easter - from death to new life to operating in the power of the Spirit, there will be times when SOMETHING gets in your way. At times, what you thought was going to be the case is not. Other times, the circumstances change around you - sometimes in a good way, other times when a boulder drops on your life.
- G. In those moments of your life - in those seasons, maybe - Jesus is asking us to pivot with Him to HIS new reality...to adjust to His will and way.

- H. For this week and next week, we'll be in the **messy middle** with the disciples and the women who were at the cross when Jesus died and who went to the empty tomb only to find that Jesus was not there.
- I. This week, we'll see how Jesus helps us adjust to the new and sometimes surprising realities in our lives. Next week, we'll see what Jesus helps us let go of so that we grow as disciples of Jesus in the future.
- J. Each week we've been asking ourselves questions for the week. First, it was, "What do I need to let die in me so that new life can begin?" Last week, was asked, "What needs to be born or reborn in me for the mission of Jesus?" I pray you've had moments when those questions came to your mind during the week.
- K. This week, the question is, **"What needs to be adjusted in my life because of Jesus and his new life?"**
- L. This is really all about the pivot...when what you thought was going to be the outcome of that new thing being born after you let something else die, needs some adjustment in your heart or mind or soul...in your life.
- M. Let's pray...and then we'll go to the Road to Emmaus, after the resurrection of Jesus.
- N. **PRAY! (Jesus, You are Lord...)**
- O. What needs to be adjusted in my life because of Jesus? Let's turn to Luke's gospel, starting in verse 13...

## 2. Scripture

### A. READ Luke 24:13-24

- i. Now, this was the very same day Jesus rose from the dead...the same day the women went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. Early on this Sunday, the women fled the tomb and went to talk to the disciples and others.
- ii. Later that same day, two followers of Jesus were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus. We aren't told WHO they were except one of them was named Cleopas. We suspect these two were 'second-tier disciples' - meaning they weren't two of the 12, but were still close followers of Jesus.
- iii. And, man, were they bummed out. Just a few days earlier, they were headed in one direction with Jesus. "This is awesome! I've got the basketball at the top of the key and I'm going to shoot!"
- iv. Then, all of a sudden, Jesus died and was buried. Talk about roadblock! Yet, earlier that morning, some of the women said Jesus was alive. These two even went to the tomb to verify that Jesus wasn't there.
- v. So, they were walking to the village of Emmaus - home, maybe. It was a few hours walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus.

- vi. Along the way, who shows up but Jesus, the very same Jesus who was raised to new life and walked out of His own grave under His own power!
- vii. In Acts 1:3, Luke (who authored both Luke and Acts) said this: “After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during 40 days and speaking about the Kingdom of God.” So, here was Jesus in one of those appearances, giving these two PROOF that he was indeed alive.
- viii. But, as we read, they didn’t know it was Jesus. They didn’t recognize him...which can only be a divine act of preventing them from seeing Jesus. All they see is the obstacle in front of them...death, grief, confusion.
- ix. Jesus asked what they were discussing. So they told Jesus everything they were talking about. The key line that gives us a clue about their state of mind is in verse 20 when they said, “But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.” How sad! And super-ironic since Jesus WAS and IS the One to redeem Israel.
- x. These two disciples had seen, or at least heard, that Jesus died. And it stopped them in their tracks. They were holding the ball that they thought was going to score the winning basket, but they had to stop short.
- xi. And they had to pivot to a new reality. Even the fact that the reports from the women at the tomb gave them the beginning of new life, they were still derailed by this sadness and grief.
- xii. But then Jesus began to speak...let’s keep reading...verse 25...

**B. READ Luke 24:25-35**

- i. Talk about a pivot. They didn’t keep going the way they were going toward Emmaus, but that very hour turned back around and headed to see the disciples in Jerusalem.
- ii. Jesus’ appearance in their lives changed their trajectory...changed their direction...changed their hearts and their minds and their decisions.
- iii. They had dealt with the death of Jesus. They were still dealing with the reported new life of Jesus.
- iv. But this (THIS) was the moment, for these two disciples, that Jesus changed their direction. And they had to adjust their whole plan - their whole lives - including what they believed and what they would do next.
- v. **They adjusted their plans to head in the direction that the presence of Jesus caused in their lives in that moment.** (let me say that again)
- vi. What needed to be adjusted in the life of these two disciples because of Jesus and his new life?

vii. Well, Luke told us they had their eyes opened by Jesus. They had their hearts warmed by Jesus. They had their direction changed because of Jesus.

### 3. Application

- A. So, what needs to be adjusted in your life, today, because of Jesus' presence and his new life?
- B. I've been a pastor long enough to know that one of the very real reasons that people come to faith for the first time or go deeper in faith in Jesus is because at some point in their lives, **God allows a boulder drop on their life.**
- i. What do I mean by that? Well, every one of us, at some point in life will have something happen that is so massive - so life-altering - that you can't proceed in the same way you were going. There's a boulder that drops on your life, either in front of you or directly ON you.
  - ii. And if you've not had a boulder drop on your life, then God is preparing you for that to happen at some point.
  - iii. When you find out you have a disease like cancer. When your spouse or a child dies. When you lose your job. When you end a relationship or marriage. These are just some of the examples of boulders that get dropped into our lives.
  - iv. There are even smaller boulders like strained relationships, bad decisions, and other things that are smaller, but still block our path.
  - v. And those boulders bring you and me to the reality that without divine help, there is NO WAY we're getting through it or around it.
  - vi. And often, it's in those pivotal moments of life, that we finally turn it all over to Jesus, who is the ONLY ONE who can lift that burden, change your course, and save your life from being stuck under that boulder.
- C. But, here's the deal: you have to allow Jesus to adjust your life in order to move forward with Him and for Him.
- D. This is not a matter of simply allowing Jesus to lift the boulder or show you how to get through it, and then keep going the same way you were going without Jesus.
- E. The women, the Twelve disciples, and these two men on the road to Emmaus adjusted everything in their lives to follow Jesus from the pivot.
- F. Were they still grieving? Yes. Were they unsure about the future? Of course! Did they want to take control and just keep swimming forward? You bet!
- G. If grief is the boulder, Jesus and his comfort are the answer. If fear and uncertainty about the future is the obstacle in front of you, then trusting in Jesus is the adjustment needed.

- H. Jesus wants to remove the boulder that's been dropped onto your life in order for the new life, that HE'S made space for, to grow in you!
- I. It's no mere coincident that the way that Jesus opened new life to his followers was to roll away a huge stone that kept him in the dark tomb.
- J. In your life, the boulders that are blocking your way to new life are not too big or bad for Jesus to move, if you're willing to adjust your life to His direction. Adjustment takes surrender. Adjustment takes obedience.
- K. I just love the way that went for the two disciples on the road that day! Their eyes were opened, their hearts were burning, and they changed course - they adjusted to the new direction and they went!
- L. Jesus wants to adjust your life to His course by doing the same thing.

**i. Jesus wants to adjust your life by opening your eyes.**

- a. The boulder that drop on our life is an eye-openers. The more suddenly it appears, the more surprising it is.
- b. The bigger they are the more shocking they can be.
- c. Yet, no obstacle that shows up in your life is a surprise to Jesus. And He can and will use that boulder to get your attention in a new way that you maybe didn't even see coming.
- d. This eye-opening is the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, even before you're aware of God's presence and attention on you.
- e. The undeserved favor of God is present in your life, even before you're saved by faith. Why? Because God created you and loves you.
- f. Psalm 146:8 says, "The LORD gives sight to the blind, the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous.
- g. Jesus said in Luke 4:18, "The spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."
- h. During this season of Lent, on this Journey of Easter, Jesus wants to open your eyes to Him in a fresh new way. He wants you to be saved by grace through faith in his life, death, and resurrection. I'll pray for us in a moment for just that to be the case in the life of everyone who can hear my voice. Second...

**ii. Jesus wants to adjust your life by giving you a burning heart.**

- a. As awesome as salvation is for you, the God of the Universe wants to adjust your heart by giving you a burning passion for Him.

- b. When your life is saved by Jesus, He asks you to worship Him. He asks you to serve Him. He asks you to love Him and love your neighbors.
- c. There are plenty of church-going people whose hearts have grown cold to the One who saved them. Jesus is calling you, again today, to have a burning heart for Him - to pray, worship, and be filled with joy and hope.
- d. Your burning heart is the engine that drives a faithful life - a life actively moving from death to new life, despite the boulders and the obstacles.
- e. Your burning heart, filled with love for God, is the motivator to love those who are different...to share your faith with those who are ripe for the gospel - who have had boulders of their own drop on them.
- f. Let Jesus fire up your heart by adjusting your life to His mission, because...

**iii. Jesus wants to adjust your life by changing your direction.**

- a. When a basketball player comes up against an opponent who's standing still, blocking his or her lane, and if that player tries to go through the blocker, they'll get a charging foul every time. To avoid that, you have to pivot.
- b. Jesus wants to adjust your life to HIS lane. To HIS shot. To HIS direction.
- c. When you try to keep going in your own lane, it's sinful. It will end in frustration and regret and the Holy Spirit may just block you.
- d. Allowing Jesus to show you the Way, with eyes opened and heart burning, will adjust everything about you.
- e. Jesus will change your sinful habits. Jesus will give you a love you never had for those who are not like you, or lost, or hurting.
- f. Changing your direction to match Jesus' direction will seem like you're heading off into the unknown, but Jesus is walking with you in that new direction.
- g. Let him. Let him change your direction. Pivot with Jesus.

**4. Conclusion**

- A. Enough with the basketball metaphors. What I want you to know is that this journey of Easter is the only path that leads to everlasting life. Every direction other than Jesus leads to death. When Jesus is leading, it leads to growth in the new life that comes when we let things like sin die.
- B. Jesus will be with you as you're grieving the things that are changing or have changed. Don't get stuck there. Ask Jesus to help you pivot. Grieving change is not wrong or bad, we just aren't called to get stuck there.

- C. As youth and health fade, Jesus is inviting you to new life. When dreams and honeymoons begin to pass, Jesus will open for eyes to new opportunities from right where you are.
- D. Jesus will be with you when you begin to have the first signs of new life from the places that were dead. He has saved you for a purpose!
- E. And Jesus will be with you as you allow Him to daily adjust your life to His will and plan for you.
- F. Let Him open your eyes every day. Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you a burning heart within you. And let Jesus change your course so that your life grows in His will...HIS way...HIS truth.
- G. Let Jesus build your life every day as you adjust to Him.
- H. Let's PRAY!** (salvation, eyes opened, hearts warmed, yielding to God's will)