

Third Sunday of Easter (A) – Luke 24:13-35

Discipleship: *An Instrument of Serenity*

Focus Question: *This week how might you be an instrument of serenity?*

word of life

"When [Jesus] was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight." (Luke 24: 30-31 NRSV)

Read Luke 24:13-35

Much had taken place in Jerusalem the week Jesus died and rose from death. Life no longer made sense to the followers of Jesus, and some had already left Jerusalem talking about the events of the week. Jesus appears to two men who were walking from Jerusalem to a town called Emmaus. As Jesus walks with them, they do not recognize him.

These anxious and disturbed men are a contrast to the serene Jesus. Patiently, Jesus listens as they recount the events occurring to Jesus, but they do not recognize the risen Jesus beside them.

1. *Describe the possible feelings of the men on the road to Emmaus.*
2. *What might have prevented the men from seeing Jesus at this part of the walk?*

Jesus tells these two men they are foolish for not being able to make sense and believe in the risen Christ. He then proceeds to interpret those things recounted in the Old Testament from Moses through the prophets. As Jesus teaches, he connects the events from the past to the current reality.

3. *What would it have been like to walk with Jesus on the road to Emmaus?*
4. *If you were on that walk, what questions would you ask Jesus?*
5. *How do you connect the Old Testament with the life and death of Jesus?*

The two men still do not perceive it is Jesus who is walking with them and teaching them. How can that be? They urge Jesus to stay with them for dinner. The scene is reminiscent of the last supper. Again, Jesus takes bread, blesses and breaks it, then gives it to them. It is in the breaking of the bread the disciples have their eyes open so that they truly see Jesus. As soon as they recognize Jesus, he disappears.

6. *What connections might be made between this meal and the last supper?*
7. *Why do you think Jesus disappeared so quickly?*
8. *What else might the disciples have asked if Jesus had not disappeared?*

The anxiety of the disciples is transformed into energetic joy. The words of the women and disciples are true. Jesus is alive. "They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'" (Luke 24:32 NRSV)

9. *What would it have been like to have your heart burn because of the teaching of Jesus?*
10. *By the end of the walk, what prevented these followers of Jesus from recognizing him?*

Within the hour, they began walking the return trip of over seven miles from Emmaus to Jerusalem. They could not wait to join others in the Easter proclamation, "The Lord has risen indeed!" (Luke 24:34 NRSV)

11. *How would this proclamation have been received by the others?*

word among us

Their grandfather sat out on the patio near the garden. He was a picture of serenity. Yet in the house, there was chaos. Many would call the family "dysfunctional". The family thought their yelling and fighting were typical of all families. The children did not know any different pattern of family life.

Since their grandfather had moved in with them, things were changing slowly. It was strange. Their grandfather never yelled back. Consequently, there seemed to be less yelling and swearing by others. It was hard to describe, but their grandfather was so calm. He had an inner peace which was a bit unnerving to the household. Yet, it was also attractive.

1. *How would you define "serenity"?*
2. *How does one obtain "serenity"?*
3. *If by chance someone develops the characteristic of "serenity", how does one keep such a perspective?*
4. *How can a serene person be both unsettling and attractive to others?*

Throughout the season of Easter, *Daily Discipleship* is using the Serenity Prayer in its reflection. Reflect on the word *serenity* as you pray, "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

5. *Who in your life has modeled "serenity"?*
6. *Describe a time in your life when you felt the gift of "serenity"?*
7. *What has or needs to change in your life so that you experience more serenity?*

As Jesus walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus, he might have been described as serene. His calmness was certainly a contrast from the anxious and distraught disciples. They had witnessed events which turned their world upside down. Jesus attempted to help them make sense by returning to the Scriptures. He did not hash over the injustice of the crucifixion, nor did he spend time describing the pain of the experience. Jesus helped connect the teaching of the old with the reality of the resurrection.

The disciples seemed to have understood, but not fully. Because they could not grasp who was teaching them, there was a significant missing piece to the puzzle. For whatever reasons, they could not see Jesus. Once Jesus was revealed to them in the breaking of the bread, then things began to make sense. They had an “Aha!” moment. At that point, those disciples could not contain or limit their excitement. They were willing to walk over seven miles from Emmaus to Jerusalem to tell the good news about Jesus Christ.

8. *What might prevent us from seeing and hearing Jesus?*
9. *What are we willing to do in order to tell someone about Jesus Christ?*

Prayer

God, grant me serenity to face the challenges and opportunities today. Amen

Dig Deeper

Psalm 116

last word

Pray each day the Serenity Prayer:

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can, and
wisdom to know the difference.