

“Stay with Us!”¹

Luke 24:29²

3rd Sunday of Easter – May 8, 2011

©2011 Rev. David P. Mumm

S1 – Stay with Us

They urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them.

There are three questions I’d like to consider in our devotion today: First, why did the Emmaus disciples ask Jesus to stay? Second, what response did Jesus provide? And third, what can we learn, that will help us as Christ’s community in this place?

S2 – Why Did They Ask Him to Stay?

Somewhere along the way, as they journeyed the seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus, an unknown man approached the disciples. Conversation ensued, as we heard in the Gospel. Upon arriving at their home in Emmaus, the two disciples invited the man to stay the night in their home. Why did they do that? I would suggest there are five answers.

¹ PR: CP 17:321

² Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible – English Standard Version ©2001 by Crossways Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved. Used by permission

S2A – The Right Thing to Do

First of all, this was the right thing to do. Traveling, especially toward evening, was extremely dangerous. The traveler appeared to have no place to stay. It was the Passover season, motels and other accommodations would be full. Sometimes we do things because it just seems like the right thing to do at that moment in time.

S2B – Touched by His Words

Second, it is obvious they were touched by His words. The conversation had benefitted them. Later, after He vanished from their sight, they said: ***“Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?”*** Their lives were being changed by this man.

S2C – Enjoying the Conversation

Third, not only were they benefiting, they were enjoying the conversation. One cannot say that about these men, as they began the walk that day. When they left Jerusalem, there was no joy in their hearts. Verse 17 tells us, ***“They stood still, looking sad.”*** In verse 21, Cleopas, one of the two, said three words that hit at the core of their sadness: ***“We had hoped...”*** Nothing is harder to endure than dashed hope. Maybe you’ve been there.

S2D – Learning from the Man

Fourth, they were gaining insight, learning from the Man. I love how Jesus interjected Himself into their conversation. He uses a methodology that still works today. He interrogated them. He questioned them – that’s what the word interrogate means. [Jesus] **said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?”** Put in today’s English, we might ask, **“What are you guys talking about?”** **“What’s the topic of your conversation?”**

The door was opened, and Jesus, though they did not recognize Him, began to teach.

S2E – Good to have Him at their home

It was a good conversation, a great learning experience.

Now they were at their home. What could be better than to continue that conversation on into the evening? They found it good to have this guest staying in their home. Few things are so pleasant as good conversation.

S3 – How did Jesus Respond?

Verse 28 leads us into the response Jesus gave to these men. **“They drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ...”** Jesus tests the desire of these men. Would their integrity and new-found friendship lead to a safe haven for the night?

He acted as though He wanted to go farther. ***“but they urged Him strongly, saying, “Stay with us...”*** They had to persuade Jesus to stay.

There is something important in that little fact. Jesus does not impose Himself on our lives. He doesn't force us to receive or welcome Him.

S3A – Graciously Accepted

When we invite Him, when we let Him know we want Him to stay with us, Jesus graciously accepts the invitation. ***“So He went in to stay with them.”***

Thursday evening, the 20 or so who gathered for our National Day of Prayer service heard a prayer first offered in 1801 by then President, Thomas Jefferson. In that prayer, there was one sentence that struck me. Jefferson prayed: ***“Bless our land with honorable ministry, sound learning, and pure manners.”*** One of the signs of a deteriorating society is the lack of common courtesy and good manners.

Jesus exemplified good manners in this text when he graciously accepted the invitation.

S3B – Brought the Word to Life

Secondly, He continued what He had started, He brought them the Word of life. To cover the ground verse 27 says Jesus covered, could have carried the conversation on for days. ***“Beginning with Moses and the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”***

S3C – Gave them the Sacrament

But then comes the defining moment. Verse 30 says: ***“While He was at table with them, He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.”*** This was eerily similar to what their Master had done, just four evenings earlier.

While we are not told by Luke whether the action was completed by Jesus, as it had been four nights earlier, the point is the same. This was the second time in Scripture that Holy Communion is observed. ***“And immediately their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him.”*** What an amazing moment that must have been.

S3D – Uplifted their Souls

The fourth response of Jesus, while not spoken, is obvious. His words and actions uplifted their souls, and gave to them, as Jeremiah calls it, ***“A future and a hope.”*** There is nothing better that can happen, then when one who has lost all hope, has full hope restored. Now they were filled with joy.

S3E – Provided Reason to Rejoice

Jesus provided reason for rejoicing. They could not contain their excitement. Even though the danger was real, that very hour, they took off and headed back to Jerusalem. ***They found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,³⁴ saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has***

appeared to Simon!”³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

God’s grace was poured out that night, in rich and abiding measure. His Spirit, whom He had promised them, began the good work of filling in the blanks, so they could understand and be prepared to proclaim the risen and living Lord.

S4 – What Can We Learn?

A few minutes ago we sang the beautiful words: ***“Abide with us, our Savior, Nor let Your mercy cease ...”***³ Just as Jesus conversed with those two men, so through His Word He speaks with us. Just as He gave insight to their hopeless walk, so He gives renewal and joy to our daily walk.

We sang, ***Abide with us, our Helper, Sustain us by Your Word...*** Every time you read the Scripture, He sustains and builds you up in His Word. He is, as we prayed and sang, ***Our Redeemer, our Prince of Peace,*** and, ***our Protector*** in every time of danger.

As He gave them the bread, so He comes to us in bread and wine, that miraculously we might receive His very body and blood, the gifts of God for the people of God. As we journey through life, as we walk our own Emmaus roads, Jesus stays with us. And so we are able to pray:

***Abide among us always, O Lord, our faithful friend,
And take us to Your mansions When time and world shall end.
Amen.***

³ LW 287