

“The Risen Lord Comforts His Disciples”

(Luke 24:13-35 – Easter 3 – April 19, 2026)

Luke 24:13-35 – ¹³Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. ¹⁷And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?” ¹⁸Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?” ¹⁹And He said to them, “What things?” So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²²Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.” ²⁵Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” ²⁷And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. ²⁸Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them. ³⁰Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. ³²And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?” ³³So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

Dear Redeemed, who live in hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead:

Have you ever been going through a dark and dismal day, just feeling down and depressed? Maybe everything seems to be going wrong and you voice your complaints to a listening friend. Then your friend gives you a comforting word, and it lifts your spirit. There is no need to worry, the problem is taken care of, everything will work out right. With that friend’s encouraging word, the dark clouds of despair disappear, and the bright sun of hope shines.

It happened to two of Jesus’ disciples. As they walked along feeling dark and dismal, down and depressed about Jesus’ death, He Himself came to them as their living Savior and Friend.

Here we see how **“The Risen Lord Comforts His Disciples”**: 1) **He listens to their hearts’ disappointment and grief**; then 2) **He points them to all the promises of Scripture He fulfills**; and by this, 3) **He lifts their spirits with joy to share the good news with others**.

1) He listens to their hearts’ disappointment and grief

As the two disciples walked the seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus, they discussed all that had happened the past few days. On Friday, Jesus had been crucified and buried. After the Sabbath, on the third day, some of the women had gone to the tomb to anoint Jesus’ body. Then they had come back with a report of seeing angels, who told them Jesus was alive. But their words seemed like nonsense to the rest. Some of the other also had gone to Jesus’ tomb and found it empty, but they did not see Him. Now as these two disciples plodded along, sullen and sad, they were trying to reason it all out and make sense of Jesus’ death.

Now the risen Lord Himself joined them on the road, but they were kept from recognizing Him. He asked what made them talk with such sad faces. By this, Jesus gave them opportunity to speak freely, as He listened to their hearts’ disappointment and grief. As will happen when one speaks to a listening friend, out of their heavy hearts poured many words. They had hoped Jesus was that Messiah Moses foretold, who would come as a Prophet, yet so much more. They had believed Jesus’ claim to be the Son of God, proven by His mighty miracles and teachings. They had expected Him to redeem Israel from earthly enemies and establish the Kingdom of God among them. Yet Jesus had been handed over to His enemies, condemned, and crucified. The once bright sun of hope seemed overshadowed by dark clouds of despair in their hearts.

What irony we see. Jesus had finished the work He came to do, redeeming sinners from our worst spiritual enemies. He had been crucified on the cross to take away the sins of the world. He had disarmed Satan’s power over us. He had conquered death in His resurrection. Jesus had promised all these things to His disciples ahead of time. Now He was present to deliver on His promise. But in their doubt and unbelief, their eyes were restrained from recognizing Him.

How often do we walk that road? In our dark hour of disappointment and grief, we may pour out our hearts before the Lord. Indeed, He invites us to pray, to cast all our cares on Him, for He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). We have His promise in Psalm 34:17-18: *“The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”*

Yet do we always speak to Him as a living Savior who is near to deliver us, or do we focus on our troubles? Do we always pray with faith in all that He has promised, or do we doubt that He will do what He says? Do we find ourselves like these disciples, plodding along under a dark cloud of despair, when the bright Son of hope Himself is risen and shining on us?

As we see here, the risen Lord comes as a Friend to comfort His disciples. He listens with full understanding; for *“Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows”* (Isaiah 53:4).

He has carried all our sins and sorrows to the cross and the grave. Now He lives to walk beside us through the dark times, to shine the light of His salvation on us!

2) He points them to all the promises of Scripture He fulfills

How does He do this? By pointing us to all the promises of Scripture He fulfills for us.

As faithful Friend, Jesus spoke the truth in love to His disciples. It began with a rebuke: *“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself*” (vs. 25-27).

From the beginning, God promised a Savior to Adam and Eve, who would conquer Satan and redeem sinners. God promised Israel’s fathers that the Savior would be their Descendant in the flesh, yet He would be Mighty God. He would come to establish His eternal Kingdom. The disciples’ faith had focused on such prophecies, anticipating Christ’s coming Kingdom. But wasn’t it also written that He must suffer many things before entering His glory? Hadn’t it been foretold how He would be despised and rejected, bruised for our iniquities, and led as a Lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:3-7)? Hadn’t all the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to Jesus’ once for all sacrifice, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29)?

Jesus had told the disciples that He must be put to death and rise the third day. Now, when they should have rejoiced in the fulfillment of all things, they were downcast in despair! It was because they were slow of heart to believe all the promises of Scriptures Jesus fulfilled.

Is this true of us at times? Like these disciples, we may be quick to listen to our own reason and understanding as we try to solve life’s problems. We may be quick to trust what we see and feel. We may be quick to listen to the inner voice of our hearts, as if to hear God speaking. But God does not direct us to such places. Rather, He points us to Scripture alone, where He has spoken all that He wants us to know, the Scriptures centered in Christ our Savior.

This is where our risen Lord directs us today for comfort. When we are downcast about our sins, feeling darkness of failures, even beginning to despair in our guilt, where shall we turn? *“If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart”* (1 John 3:20). In His Word, He declares the full forgiveness for our sins, pardon for all our guilt. It is all paid for at the cross. *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 8:1).

When we are downcast and distressed about bad things that have happened, when our path in life has taken a turn for the worse and we are starting to feel hopeless, where shall we turn? Though our thoughts may trouble us, God says in His Word: *“I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope”* (Jeremiah 29:11). By His revealed Word, *“we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose”* (Romans 8:28).

When we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, feeling the darkness of grief, where shall we turn? Though our hearts tempt us to think all is lost, Jesus comforts us by His Word: *“Because I live, you will live also”* (John 14:19). He lifts our hearts to the everlasting Kingdom He is preparing for us. He puts new joy in our hearts, as we say by faith in His Word: *“I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD”* (Psalm 118:17).

3) He lifts their spirits with joy to share the good news with others

The living Savior comforts His disciples as He points them to all the promises of Scripture He fulfills. And by this, He lifts their spirits with joy to share the good news with others.

As the two disciples arrived at Emmaus, they wanted to hear more. They invited Jesus: *“Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.”* Now the invited Guest became the Host: *“It came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?’”* (vs. 29-32).

Now strengthened by the living Savior’s Word, rejoicing in the proof of His salvation, the disciples rushed all the way back to Jerusalem to share the good news with the other disciples. When they arrived, the others also reported: *“The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!”* (vs. 34). Soon Jesus appeared to all of them with proofs that He was alive in the flesh (vs. 36-43)! So the risen Lord would continue to appear to His disciples over the next forty days until His ascension – filling their hearts with joy, and sending them out into all the world to share His good news of forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life with all people (Mark 16:15).

Jesus does not promise to appear to us the same way, but He does promise all His followers: *“I am with you always, even to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20). Therefore we pray: *“Abide with us.”* Lord Jesus, continue to come and strengthen our faith, and give us the joy of Your salvation! As the invited Guest, Jesus abides with us in His Word and Sacraments. As the Host, He feeds us His banquet of salvation. He opens the Scriptures to us, guiding us into all truth by His Spirit. He gives us His Body and Blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of our sins. He who gave His life for us and rose again for our salvation, assures us that He will give us every good thing until He brings us home to heaven. Do not our hearts burn within us, as the fire of faith is kindled and strengthened by His Word?

So our risen Lord comforts us. Even in our darkest days, Jesus abides with us as our faithful Friend and Savior. He listens as we pour out our hearts in prayer. He strengthens us by His Word and promises. The risen Son shines His bright rays of eternal life and hope on us. He lifts our spirits with joy to share the good news with all: *“The Lord is risen indeed!”*

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.