

Cutting Straight the Word of the Truth on Luke 24:13-35

Was Jesus' Breaking of Bread with the Two Disciples Going to Emmaus a Lord's Table Meeting?

A recent article in the internet strongly advocates the practice of house-to-house Lord's table meeting even with only two or three persons on a regular basis, citing the Lord's breaking of the loaf as He reclined at the table with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus in Luke 24:13-33 as a clear example of such a practice.

Is it really so? Did the Lord indeed have a Lord's table meeting with the two disciples? Is the alleged Lord's table meeting a fact or a supposition? It is worthwhile to examine such a claim in the light of the Scriptures itself and vis-à-vis the teaching of prominent Bible scholars, most especially brothers Nee and Lee, to see what they taught regarding this portion of the Word.

Brother Lee pointed out to us the numerous meetings that the Lord had after His resurrection, but a Lord's table meeting with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus is *not* one of them:

“According to the account of the Bible, the Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, either individually or corporately, about eleven or twelve times.... In the morning of the resurrection day, the Lord Jesus firstly appeared to one sister alone, Mary Magdalene (John 20:14-18). After that, in the same morning, He appeared to a few sisters together as they went to tell His disciples that He was risen (Matt. 28:8-10; Luke 24:9-10). Thirdly, during the day, the Lord Jesus purposely appeared to Peter (1 Cor. 15:5). Then, in the afternoon, or in the early evening, He appeared to two disciples on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). The fifth instance of His appearing was that night, when He appeared to all the leading disciples in the room with the doors shut (John 20:19-23). The sixth was the following Lord's day, seven days later—at that time He appeared again to His leading disciples including Thomas (John 20:24-29). The seventh was His appearance to His disciples on the mountain in Galilee appointed by Him (Matt. 28:16-20). Eighth, He appeared to His disciples on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius (John 21:1-23); ninth, to five hundred people at once (1 Cor. 15:6). The tenth was His appearance to James, individually (1 Cor. 15:7). Number eleven, according to 1 Corinthians 15:7, was to all the Apostles—it is rather difficult to decide whether this was another separate appearance. Then eventually He appeared to the disciples on the Mount of Olives, when He ascended to the heavens (Luke 24:50-52; Acts 1:6-12). According to this enumeration we have twelve instances. But Acts 1:3 tells us that He was ‘seen of them forty days’; so this allows for many additional appearances.” (*W. Lee, How to Meet, Chapter 3, Section 3, LSM*)

A “Lord's table meeting” with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus cannot be one of the many other appearances because Brother Lee said that the Lord's meeting with the disciples on the night of resurrection (Luke 24:33-36) was His first, which was after His appearance to the two disciples earlier that same day:

“This speaks of the two disciples who left Jerusalem to go to Emmaus. On their way, when they discovered that it was the Lord who had appeared to them, the Lord disappeared from them. Immediately they returned to Jerusalem, where they should have remained originally. When they arrived, they found the apostles and those with them assembled together, and the Lord appeared among them. They and the apostles and the other disciples all enjoyed the Lord’s appearing and experienced the blessing of the Lord’s presence when He returned among the disciples for the first time after His resurrection. This is also an evidence of the importance of meetings.” (*W. Lee, Life Lessons, Vol. 2 (#13-24), Chapter 2, Section 1, LSM*)

Brother Lee also said that there are many lessons that we may learn from the experiences of the two disciples:

“We have seen that the case of the Lord’s appearing to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (vv. 13-35) is helpful and practical for our experience.” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Luke, Chapter 55, Section 1, LSM*)

It is noteworthy that brothers Nee and Lee related and applied the experience of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus in their messages to truths and life lessons. These many lessons include the revelation concerning His resurrection, on knowing the Bible, the experience of life, meeting, service, and even character. It will benefit us if we revisit the teaching of our brothers.

On revelation, we see from this case how God was happy with the resurrected Christ, that Solomon was a type of Christ in resurrection, how Christ blossomed in resurrection, that Christ’s resurrection was His glorification, and that His resurrection was not bound by space and time.

On knowing the Bible, we see how the incident is a paradigm of experiencing the Lord’s opening of our mind to understand the Bible, to believe and accept the testimony of the Bible, and to experience the Holy Spirit speaking to us the Words of the Bible.

On the experience of life, we see how the two disciples experienced the inward knowledge of the Lord when the Lord broke the bread. They were brought from an outward and doctrinal knowledge of the Lord into an inward and subjective knowledge. Such an experience of the Lord’s presence was in a quiet, normal and ordinary way. They were trained by the Lord to experience living by faith on His invisible presence, in order to experience the God Who hides Himself. Such a Christ is our shepherd leading and guiding us, so that we are not separated from God. Rather, we walk with God, bringing the Lord with us even when we go away because He is omnipresent. Furthermore, in His resurrection, we can experience being one with Him because God is now mingled with man. Hence, we need to redeem our time to be filled with the Spirit.

On meeting, we see how the Lord met with the disciples in resurrection. The disciples met together to testify of their personal experiences of Christ. They met by denying their self and exercising their spirit.

On service, the passage shows how we need to have an interest on people, especially the young people, to take care of them. We need to shepherd people by not making demands on others or judging them superficially, but knowing them according to their deeper condition, the same way that the Lord shepherded the two disciples going to Emmaus. For this, we need to experience the help of the Spirit in helping the saints.

Finally, on character and virtue, this record in the Word shows us that we need to learn to be fine in character and to learn the forbearance of Christ.

Excerpts from the ministry of brothers Nee and Lee providing exposition on the points above are separately quoted in full after the conclusion.

Conclusion

It is clear that both brothers Nee and Lee related and applied the experience of the two disciples in Luke 24:13-33 to the revelation of the truth regarding the different aspects of Christ's resurrection and various experiences in life and service. They did not relate the incident to the Lord's table meeting. Instead, Brother Lee referred to the breaking of the loaf and handling it to the two disciples as an example of the Lord's shepherding, in the same principle in which He broke the five loaves in the wilderness to shepherd the five thousand.

Notable Bible scholars did not interpret the Lord's breaking of bread with the two disciples going to Emmaus as a Lord's table meeting. Some renowned Bible expositors like C.I. Scofield, R. Jamieson, J.W. Mc Garvey, P.Y. Pendleton, and B.W. Johnson, were silent regarding the loaf in Luke 24:30, but others were not.

Matthew Henry suggests that the reclining at the table to partake of the loaf in this verse pertains not to a "sacramental meal, but a common meal" (*Matthew Henry, Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible*), while *Barnes New Testament Notes* indicates that the partaking of the loaf is "not sacramental but a common supper." John Lightfoot stresses that "it is strange that any should expound this breaking of bread of the holy Eucharist, when Christ had determined with himself to disappear in the very distribution of the bread and so interrupt the supper. And where indeed doth it appear that any of them tasted a bit? For the supper was ended before it began." (*John Lightfoot's Bible Commentary*)

John Nelson Darby, who is called "the king of Bible exposition", had this to say: "In the journey to Emmaus the Lord connects the scriptures with all that happened to Himself, shewing to their minds still lingering round the thought of an earthly kingdom, that according to these scriptures God's revealed counsels, the Christ ought to suffer and enter into His glory, a rejected and heavenly Christ. He awakens that ardent attention which the heart feels whenever it is touched. He then reveals Himself in breaking bread-the sign of His death: not that this was the Eucharist, but this particular act was linked with that event. Then their eyes were opened, and He disappears. It was the true Jesus; but in resurrection. Here He Himself explained all that the scriptures had spoken, and presented Himself in life with the symbol of His death. The two disciples return to Jerusalem." [*Emphasis Added*] (*J.N. Darby, Synopsis of the Bible*)

In his book *The Lord's Table Meeting: For the Remembrance of the Lord and the Worship of the Father*, composed of 48 pages of outlines from the notes and printed publications of Brother Lee from 1964 through 1990 written to uplift our vision and practice of the Lord's table meeting, Brother Lee did not reference the Lord's table meeting to the loaf or the bread in Luke 24:30 and 35. Conversely, from the other messages excerpted in this article, we find that Brother Lee refers to them only as "sitting down to dine with them", "when they arrived, they stopped to eat", and "the Lord sat down to dine with them", just as other prominent Bible expositors did.

Moreover, the claim of the writer that such meal that the Lord shared with the two disciples going to Emmaus was a Lord's table meeting begs more questions: With an intention of traveling to Emmaus, would they likely have in their mind to have a bread-breaking meeting along the way? Did the two disciples going to Emmaus bring with them unleavened bread for their travel? Why did the Lord break the bread and suddenly disappear before the disciples could eat the bread? Why is there no record that the two disciples partook of the bread or drank the cup, but instead the Word tells us that immediately they went back to Jerusalem. Why was there no mention of a cup at all in this portion of the Word? The conspicuous absence of the cup is telling. For the Lord to institute a Lord's table meeting without the cup of the produce of the vine would be against His own teaching and inconsistent to what the believers have been practicing since He first instituted it on the night of His betrayal. Hence, for one to insist on citing the incident as an example of house-to-house Lord's table meeting of two or three persons makes it an *eisegesis*, interpreting the Scriptures based on one's own ideas or bias, rather than the meaning of the text.

Let us all feast on the riches of the Lord's Word as interpreted and richly supplied to us through the ministry of the age. Rather than twisting the word in the Scriptures, may we be preserved by the Lord to faithfully follow the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles which is according to God's New Testament economy, to remain in it, for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12).

Excerpts from the Ministry

The many lessons we can learn from Luke 24:13-35 are clearly presented to us in the ministry of brothers Nee and Lee:

On Revelation

God Being Happy with the Resurrected Christ

"When Christ was transfigured, 'Behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I delight; hear Him!' (Matt. 17:5). The transfiguration was a foreshadowing of the resurrection. The changing of His form also typified His glorification. He asked the two on the road to Emmaus, 'Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?' (Luke 24:26). We can see from this verse that entering into His glory was the same as His being resurrected. God took pleasure in the resurrection and glorification of His Son." (*W. Lee, Life Messages, Vol. 1 (#1-41), Chapter 33, Section 3, LSM*)

Solomon Being a Type of Christ in Resurrection

“Some people think that Christ’s glorification will begin with His second coming; however, the Bible clearly reveals that Christ entered into glory after His death and resurrection. In Luke 24:26 the Lord said to two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus, ‘Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?’ This indicates that the Lord entered into glory as soon as He resurrected. In principle, Christ’s being in the heavens now, His coming back to the earth in the future, and His living in us and being with us today are all in glory. Solomon is a type of Christ in glory.” (*W. Lee, Three Aspects of the Church: The Meaning of the Church, Book 1, Chapter 9, Section 1, LSM*)

Christ Blossoming in Resurrection

“When the Lord Jesus prayed that the Father would glorify Him, He actually prayed that He would enter into glory through death and resurrection. In Luke 24:26 the Lord Jesus asked the two disciples on the way to Emmaus: ‘Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?’ When the Lord Jesus spoke these words, He was already in resurrection. Thus, for Him to enter into His glory was for Him to be in resurrection. This verse reveals clearly that Christ’s glorification was His resurrection. The Lord’s resurrection was His blossoming. Christ’s blossoming, His glorification, refers to His resurrection in its fullness.” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of 2 Corinthians, Chapter 22, Section 1, LSM*)

“We need to see that the glory is Christ blossoming in resurrection. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was God incarnate. God was concealed within the physical body of the Lord Jesus. Inwardly there was God; outwardly there was the flesh, and with this flesh there was no glory. In John 17:1 the Lord Jesus prayed, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You.’ When the Lord Jesus prayed that the Father would glorify Him, He actually prayed that He would enter into glory through death and resurrection. In Luke 24:26 He asked the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, ‘Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?’ When the Lord Jesus spoke these words, He was already in resurrection. Thus, for Him to enter into His glory was for Him to be in resurrection. This verse reveals clearly that Christ’s resurrection was His glorification.” (*W. Lee, The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 306-322), Chapter 11, Section 4, LSM*)

Christ’s Resurrection Being His Glorification

“Many of us think the Lord was glorified when He was taken up into the heavens, but this is not accurate. If we read Luke 24:26, we will see that by the resurrection the Lord was glorified. ‘Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?’ After His resurrection, He met two disciples on the way to Emmaus and told them He had already entered into His glory. This word was spoken before His ascension, but after His resurrection.” (*W. Lee, The All-Inclusive Spirit of Christ, Chapter 1, Section 5, LSM*)

“When was the Lord Jesus glorified? He entered into glory when He resurrected. The record in Luke 24 tells us that after His resurrection and before His ascension, when He met the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, the Lord told them, ‘Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?’ (v. 26). This proves that when He resurrected, even though He had not yet ascended, He had already entered into His glory.” (*W. Lee, One Body, One Spirit, and One New Man, Chapter 1, Section 2, LSM*)

“Christ’s resurrection was also His glorification. Christ’s resurrection brought Him into glory (Luke 24:26; 1 Cor. 15:43a; Acts 3:13a, 15a). The Lord’s divine nature, His divine being, was concealed and confined within His flesh. Through death the confinement of His humanity, His flesh, was broken, and then in resurrection He was released as the very God with His nature and riches. Because He was released from the confinement of His flesh in resurrection, He was glorified. This was the reason the Lord said to the disciples on the way to Emmaus that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and enter into His glory (Luke 24:26). It was through His resurrection that He entered into glory.” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Luke, Chapter 54, Section 2, LSM*)

“The man Jesus was glorified through His resurrection. Not only was the Son of God glorified by being released from within the shell of the Lord’s humanity, but the man Jesus was also glorified. He was glorified when His humanity was brought into divinity. Hallelujah, now there is a man in the glory! When some hear that the man Jesus is now in glory, they may understand this to mean that He is in the heavens. However, Luke 24:26 indicates that He entered into glory even before His ascension. While on the way to Emmaus, He said to the disciples, ‘Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?’ This refers to His resurrection, which brought Him into glory (1 Cor. 15:43; Acts 3:13a, 15a). The Man-Savior’s resurrection was His entering into glory. Therefore, glorification means not only that the Son of God was released from His human shell, but also that the Lord’s humanity has been brought into divinity.” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Luke, Chapter 71, Section 3, LSM*)

Resurrection Not Being Bound by Space and Time

“Moreover, resurrection is not bound by space either. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus saw the resurrected Lord, but the disciples in Jerusalem also saw Him on the same day (Luke 24:13-35). When the Son of God resurrected, He transcended geography and time. In His resurrection there is no such thing as a sequence of time. He does not have a time schedule for His work. He does not have to wait three or five years for something to happen. The matter of time and space no longer exists. Today everyone on the whole earth can touch Him at the same time.” (*W. Nee, The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 3) Vol. 59: Miscellaneous Records of the Kuling Training (1), Chapter 11, Section 2, LSM*)

On Knowing the Bible

Experiencing the Lord's Opening of Our Mind to Understand the Bible

“Just as the Man-Savior had opened the Scriptures to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, He now opened the Word to those gathered in the room. He also opened their minds to understand the Scriptures: ‘And He said to them, These are my words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all the things must be fulfilled which have been written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and Psalms concerning Me. Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures’ (vv. 44-45). The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms are the three sections of the entire Old Testament, that is, all the Scriptures (v. 27). The Savior’s word here unveils that the entire Old Testament was a revelation of Him and that He was its center and content. The fact that He opened the mind of the disciples indicates that in order to understand the Scriptures our mind needs to be opened by the Lord Spirit through His enlightening (Eph. 1:18).” (*W. Lee, Life-Study of Luke, Chapter 55, Section 1, LSM*)

Believing and Accepting the Testimony of the Bible

“What are the words of Moses and the prophets? After the Lord Jesus resurrected, He was walking with the two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus. ‘And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He explained to them clearly in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself’ (Luke 24:27).... The words of Moses and the prophets were the words spoken by the Lord Jesus.... God has given us the Bible. Since we can believe the words of the Scripture, He will not send a man from the dead to preach the gospel.... Today God does not use spectacular ways to express Himself. He simply wants man to believe His Word.... This revelation tells us that if people do not believe the words of Moses and the prophets, it would be futile even if someone were raised from the dead. Therefore, if people do not accept the testimony of the Bible, they will not believe even if someone rises from the dead.” (*W. Nee, The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 1) Vol. 20: Questions on the Gospel, Chapter 39, Section 1, LSM*)

Experiencing the Holy Spirit Speaking to Us the Words of the Bible

“The Holy Spirit must speak to the church again from the written word. The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself. Rather, He reiterates in man's heart the written word.... We must allow the Holy Spirit to speak His word through the written text.... The reading of the Bible is for the purpose of receiving the speaking of the Holy Spirit. As the resurrected Savior expounded the Scripture to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus and caused their hearts to burn within them, in the same way the Spirit who has been sent also opens the Bible to all the believers, enlightening the word and pricking the believers' hearts with it. When we realize this, we will prepare ourselves by prayer and meditation. In this way, the Holy Spirit will be able to speak to us the words of the Bible.” (*W. Nee, The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 1) Vol. 04: The Christian (2), Chapter 4, Section 11, LSM*)

On the Experience of Life

Experiencing the Inward Knowledge of the Lord

“In Luke 24:13-31 the Lord Jesus met two disciples on the way to Emmaus, and He walked with them. While they journeyed, the Lord asked them questions and they answered, or they asked and the Lord answered. The conversation was not short, and the Lord expounded the Scripture to them. When they were near Emmaus, they constrained Him, saying, ‘Stay with us, because it is near evening and the day is already gone by’ (v. 29). The Lord went in and stayed with them. They even invited the Lord to their meal. During this long conversation, they did not recognize the Lord Jesus. Only when the Lord took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them were their eyes opened. Then they recognized the Lord. This shows us that even when a man walks with the Lord side by side, he still may not know who He is. Even when he talks with the Lord, he can still be ignorant of who He is.” (*W. Nee, The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 3) Vol. 53: The Ministry of God's Word, Chapter 9, Section 3, LSM*)

“After the Lord's resurrection, two of the disciples went to Emmaus. On the way they were talking to each other concerning all the things which had occurred, that is, about the things concerning the Lord Jesus which Mary had related. At that moment, the Lord Jesus Himself drew near to them.... The Lord conversed with them, taught them, and clearly explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself, beginning from Moses and from all the prophets. Yet they still did not know Him. Although they understood the teachings of the Scriptures and were touched and even burning in their hearts, they still did not know the Lord Jesus. This shows us that doctrines and revelation are two different things. They understood the Scriptures, but they did not know the Lord. They knew the teachings about Christ, but they did not know Christ.

“When it was near evening and they were coming close to Emmaus, they constrained Him to stay with them. As they reclined at table, Jesus took the loaf and handed it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. This shows us clearly that there are two kinds of knowledge of the Lord. One kind of knowledge is from the Bible, while the other kind of knowledge comes when the Lord opens men's eyes.... We must remember that it is useless to have Bible knowledge without knowing the Lord. The two disciples that were on the way to Emmaus knew the Scriptures already, and while the Lord was talking with them and explaining the Scriptures to them on the way, their hearts were burning. Yet they still did not know the Lord. The only true knowledge of the Lord is inward knowledge. Do you have such an inward knowledge of the Lord?” (*W. Nee, The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 2) Vol. 37: General Messages (1), Chapter 2, Section 2, LSM*)

Experiencing the Lord's Presence in a Quiet, Normal, and Ordinary Way

“Luke 24:13-35 gives us an account of two disciples who, after the Lord resurrected, left Jerusalem to go to Emmaus. The Lord came to them in a quiet, normal, and even hidden way, a way that was very ordinary. He was Christ, yet the two disciples did not recognize Him. It seems as if He pretended not to be Christ and asked them what they were talking about.... He talked with them, walked with them, and stayed with them without telling them that it was He whom they were speaking about. Then at a certain time the two disciples realized that He was the Lord. At that point He disappeared from them. It is often the same in our experience of Christ. If we do not realize that it is He Himself, we sense His presence with us, but when we are clear about our experience, the sense of His presence is gone.... The Lord Jesus dwells within us as life today in just such a hidden, normal way, without anything extraordinary or special.... The Jesus Christ who dwells in us today is the same One who walked with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. He is within us in a quiet, normal, and ordinary way. Hence, we should not expect something special of Him. Day by day and moment by moment we must learn to know and experience this wonderful, profound, and marvelous Savior.” (*W. Lee, The Relationship of God with Man in God's New Creation, Chapter 10, Section 1, LSM*)

“It is so strange and interesting to see that when we are not conscious of His presence, He is more with us. When those two dear but poor brothers on their way to Emmaus were speaking with Him and even rebuking Him—‘You came from Jerusalem, don't you know what's going on there?’ — He was so much with them. But once their eyes were opened and they realized it was the Lord, He vanished. Do you think He left them? No, He just disappeared in order to train them, in order to help them realize not only His visible presence, but even more His invisible presence. His visible presence is not so precious as His invisible presence. When you are quite conscious of the Lord's presence sometimes, it is not as good as when you are unconscious of His presence. Can you follow me? Many times we are not conscious of His presence; yet that is the most wonderful time.” (*W. Lee, How to Meet, Chapter 6, Section 1, LSM*)

Experiencing the Lord's Training to Live by Faith on His Invisible Presence

“From that time—the evening of the day of the Lord's resurrection—the Lord led His disciples to know and appreciate His presence within them. Previously He came into their midst in his flesh to be with them outwardly. Now He wanted to come into them as the Spirit to be with them inwardly. Previously His presence with them was at specific moments, was limited by time and space, and was visible. Now His presence with them would be at every moment, would not be limited by time or space, and would be invisible. Therefore, since the evening of the day of His resurrection, every time He came into their midst it was puzzling to them. The doors of the room they were in were all shut tight, but suddenly He came and stood in their midst. Then He went away without their knowing how it happened. It seemed that His coming and going were untraceable. It was always like this in all His dealings with them during the forty days after His resurrection. Once on the road to Emmaus, He

drew near to the two disciples in a mysterious way and walked with them for a distance, but they did not recognize Him. It was not until they came to the village, entered into a house, and reclined at the table with Him that they recognized Him. But when they recognized Him, He suddenly disappeared again. It seemed that He came suddenly and went suddenly. In fact, it was not so; rather, it was that His presence with them was sometimes manifested and sometimes hidden. He dealt with them in this way to let them know that His presence with them now was different from before. His intention was to lead them to know that He was with them inwardly as the Spirit. He also wanted to train them to inwardly enjoy His constant presence, which is not limited by time and space, and thus learn to deal with Him and contact Him inwardly not by sight but by faith.” (*W. Lee, The Spirit and the Service in the Spirit, Chapter 2, Section 5, LSM*)

“From that day onward, He was not only among His disciples but also within them in order to train them to get accustomed to His invisible presence. For the three and a half years of His earthly ministry, Peter, John, James, and the other disciples were used to His visible presence, but then His presence became invisible. The disciples were not used to this invisible presence so the Lord trained them for forty days. In these forty days, He appeared to them unexpectedly without their realization (John 21:4; Luke 24:15-16). When the two disciples on the road to Emmaus realized that it was Jesus who was with them, He disappeared from them (Luke 24:31). Many times we may not have much realization that Jesus the Lord is with us. However, many saints have experienced the Lord’s appearing to them when they were going somewhere or doing something against His wishes.... He appears to us many times in order to restrict us and enlighten us to keep us on the way that leads to life.” (*W. Lee, God’s New Testament Economy, Chapter 1, Section 3, LSM*)

“The invisible presence of the processed Triune God was now within them. They had to be trained to practice this presence, to live and behave in this life, and to be persons in this life. The Lord was training them to be the divine persons on this earth. This is wonderful! The Lord created the entire universe in six days, but He spent forty days to train His disciples. The training of the disciples was a much bigger task than the creation of the universe. He appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), He appeared to the disciples twice in a closed room (John 20:19, 26), and He also appeared to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias (John 21:1). His appearing and disappearing trained His disciples to know His invisible presence.” (*W. Lee, God’s New Testament Economy, Chapter 7, Section 1, LSM*)

Experiencing the God Who Hides Himself

“I love to read Luke 24. I think: What nonsense those two disciples talked on the way to Emmaus! (But I sometimes discover myself to be one of the two!) Just as those sad-faced disciples were walking along the road, mournfully communing with one another about the death of their Lord, suddenly Someone joined them and asked what they were talking about.... Up to this point the two were still unenlightened; but they must have been impressed by the Stranger, for when they reached the village and Jesus ‘acted as

though He would go farther...they constrained Him' to stay with them. And when they invited Him to eat, He quite unceremoniously assumed the place of host, 'took the loaf and blessed it, and having broken it, He began handing it to them.' At that point 'their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him.' And here is the amazing thing: When they could not see, He could listen; when they talked nonsense, He could go out of His way and accompany them for a long time; but as soon as their eyes were opened, 'He disappeared from them.' That is His disposition!" (*W. Lee, A God Who Hides Himself, Chapter 1, Section 5, LSM*)

"After He entered into resurrection, He was still in the midst of the disciples and stayed on the earth for forty days and nights. In these forty days and nights He was within them and moved with them, yet they did not realize it. At that time the Lord's presence with the disciples was sometimes visible and sometimes invisible. It was sometimes manifested and sometimes hidden. When He was manifested, the disciples felt that He had come. When He hid Himself, the disciples said that He had gone. In fact, He had neither come nor gone. He was simply there, allowing them to see Him in one instance and hiding Himself in another. When two sorrowful disciples were talking on their way to Emmaus, the Lord Jesus also joined them and went along with them, asking them what they were talking about.... They began speaking with one another and enjoyed it very much. However, these two disciples were not able to recognize that this person was the Lord Jesus (Luke 24:13-27)." (*W. Lee, Bearing Remaining Fruit, Vol. 2, Chapter 4, Section 2, LSM*)

Experiencing Christ Being Our Shepherd Leading Us and Guiding Us

"As our Shepherd, the Lord leads us first and then guides us. He leads us to the right place, and He guides us to the exact spot. This is Christ, our Shepherd.... For Christ to be our Shepherd, He must be with us, even in us. Many times He goes along with us in order to turn us back. Consider how the Lord was the Shepherd to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. These disciples were going in one direction, but the Lord went with them in order to turn them to go in another direction.... After walking a while together, they constrained the Lord to stay with them (v. 29). Then, as He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, 'their eyes were opened, and they knew Him' (vv. 30-31). This is an example of the Lord's shepherding.... Sometimes the Lord shepherds us in the same way that He shepherded the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We also may speak to Him in a nonsensical way or ask Him nonsensical questions. We may even rebuke Him, and He may pretend not to know what we are talking about. Many of us can testify of having the Lord Jesus shepherd us in this way. As the life-giving Spirit dwelling within us, He is the Shepherd to us in our experience." (*W. Lee, Life-Study of 1 Peter, Chapter 21, Section 3, LSM*)

Experiencing Not Being Separated from God

"...In the Old Testament age God purposely did not join Himself with man; God was God and man was man. But today we cannot say that God and man are separate, because we have been regenerated of God. Therefore, it is

impossible for us to be separated from God. Even if we go downward in our Christian life, He goes with us. In Luke 24, after the Lord's resurrection, the Lord took a journey with two of His disciples as they were going away from Jerusalem to Emmaus (vv. 13-35). They were going downward, yet the Lord went with them and walked with them. The two disciples talked about the Lord and even rebuked the Lord (v. 18), but the Lord pretended not to know anything. Their eyes were kept from recognizing Him (v. 16). Eventually, however, He opened their eyes and they recognized Him (v. 31). As soon as they recognized Him, He disappeared from them. This shows that we can never be separated from the Lord.” (W. Lee, *The Central Line of the Divine Revelation, Chapter 21, Section 1, LSM*)

Experiencing the Walking with God

“Please tell me, is God walking with you, or are you walking with God? Was God walking with Enoch or was Enoch walking with God? The Bible does not say that God walked with Enoch; it says that Enoch walked with God. It is difficult to find a place in the Bible that tells us that God walked with people. We do find an instance of this in Luke 24. On the day of resurrection the Lord Jesus walked with the two disciples who were going from Jerusalem to Emmaus. The disciples did not walk with the Lord Jesus; the Lord Jesus walked with them. Whenever the Lord walks with you, it means that you are going downward. You are descending from Jerusalem to Emmaus. However, whenever you walk with the Lord, you are going upward, coming back to Jerusalem from Emmaus. Are you walking with the Lord or is He walking with you? In other words, are you going downward or upward? If you are going downward to the movies, for example, the Lord Jesus will walk there with you. Many times the Lord has walked downward with the saints in such a way. A number of saints have told the Lord, ‘Lord, I cannot stay with You. I want to go to a movie.’ Then the Lord has said, ‘Are you going to a movie? I will go there with you; I will walk downward with you. Why will I walk with you there? Because I am going to bring you back. You shouldn't go downward to Emmaus. My intention is that you all remain in Jerusalem. Since you are going down, I have to go with you. I must walk with you in order to bring you back.’” (W. Lee, *Life-Study of Genesis, Chapter 26, Section 3, LSM*)

Experiencing Bringing the Lord with Us Even When We are Going Away

“In 24:13-35 we have an account of the Man-Savior’s appearing to two disciples.... These two disciples were fully disappointed, deeply discouraged. Because they were discouraged, they did not stay in Jerusalem. Instead, they left Jerusalem for Emmaus.... Verse 15 simply tells us that Jesus drew near and went with the two disciples. We are not told where He came from. After the Man-Savior entered into resurrection, He became omnipresent. Since He is omnipresent, we cannot stay away from Him. When the disciples were in Jerusalem, He was with them. When they left Jerusalem for Emmaus, He walked with them. It is a fact that the resurrected Christ is with us wherever we may be. If we walk in a downward direction, we bring Him with us. In Luke 24 the two disciples brought the Lord with them on the way from Jerusalem to Emmaus.” (W. Lee, *Life-Study of Luke, Chapter 54, Section 3, LSM*)

Experiencing God Mingling with Man

“In the evening of the Lord Jesus’ resurrection, He came into the midst of the disciples and breathed Himself into them, saying, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ (20:22). This was an extremely great matter. From that time on, the Lord Jesus dwelt in His disciples. He was not bound by time or space; for instance, the Lord was able to enter into the midst of the disciples even though the doors were shut (v. 19), and after He talked with the two disciples who were going to Emmaus and reclined at table with them, He suddenly disappeared from them (Luke 24:30-31). Thus, we must see that from the day of the Lord Jesus’ resurrection, His presence with the disciples progressed from being merely outward to being inward, from being visible to being invisible, and from being limited by time and space to being outside of time and space.” (*W. Lee, Spiritual Reality, Chapter 11, Section 2, LSM*)

Experiencing the Redeeming of Our Time to Be Filled with the Spirit

“Verse 11: ‘And later the rest of the virgins came also, saying, Lord, lord, open to us!’ In verse 11 we have the pleadings of the foolish virgins. By now they have bought the oil. The five prudent and the five foolish were all virgins; they all had lamps, oil, and light. They all went forth to meet the bridegroom. They all slept, heard the cry, and arose. They all trimmed their lamps, and by now they all have oil in their vessels. The only difference is time; some are faster than others in discerning the time. On the road to Emmaus the Lord rebuked the two disciples saying, ‘O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!’ (Luke 24:25). In like manner, the Lord rebuked Thomas in John 20:29. The question of time is crucial.... The foolish do not redeem the time, but the wise redeem the time. They are the ones who are filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:17-18). Brothers and sisters, since we have to be filled by the Holy Spirit anyway, why not let it be today? Why choose to wait until that time when the rapture takes place?... As soon as we mature, we will be raptured. Therefore, in a sense, we determine our own time of rapture. We decide for ourselves whether we will be wise or foolish.” (*W. Nee, The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 1) Vol. 15: Study on Matthew, Chapter 27, Section 5, LSM*)

On Meeting

Meeting with the Lord in Resurrection

“Then in the evening of the same day, the disciples were in an extremely unsettled condition. Some like Mary had seen the Lord after His resurrection and had brought the news to the others. Some had seen the Lord during the day on the road to Emmaus. They came together not knowing where to turn or what to expect next. Suddenly the Lord Jesus was there. All the doors were shut, but Jesus suddenly appeared. There was nothing formal, nothing religious, nothing arranged, nothing scheduled. It simply says that Jesus came and stood in the midst and said unto them, ‘Peace be unto you’.... After saying this, He did a very foolish thing to our natural mind. He breathed upon them. Jesus breathed into

His disciples and said unto them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit [or we may say, as in Greek, the Holy Breath]' (John 20:22).... It is certainly nothing religious. And there is no record that Jesus left. The record only says that Jesus came in when the doors were shut; it does not mention His leaving." (*W. Lee, Christ versus Religion, Chapter 9, Section 3, LSM*)

Meeting to Testify Our Personal Experiences of Christ

"Read the last chapters of the four Gospels. So many of the disciples had some personal experiences of Christ.... Early in the morning of the day of resurrection Mary received an experience of Christ (John 20:11-18). The two disciples walking to Emmaus also received a vital, personal experience of Him. They were so zealous for Christ, and suddenly Christ came and joined them. They did not know it was the Lord, but later when they constrained Him to abide with them, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. Then He vanished out of their sight. Immediately they decided to turn back to Jerusalem, and arriving there, they found a meeting in progress. In the meeting they were told how the Lord was resurrected and had appeared to Simon, and it seemed that they said, 'Amen, we saw Him too.' Then suddenly Jesus Himself appeared again (Luke 24:1-36).

"Many times I have had the same kind of experience as those two brothers going to Emmaus. Many times when I have opened the Bible, it seemed that I could not see Jesus in the Word; but after a while, it was so wonderful, Jesus appeared. My heart was bubbling and burning within me; then suddenly, it seemed that He disappeared, and I was so disappointed. Have you ever had this kind of experience? Then I have felt that I must go to the meeting and tell the brothers what a wonderful, personal contact I've had with Jesus that day and how He seemed to disappear. When I have gone to the meeting and while I was giving such a testimony, there Jesus was! Many times it is like this. We do need the personal, sweet experiences of the resurrected Christ in our daily walk." (*W. Lee, How to Meet, Chapter 3, Section 3, LSM*)

Meeting by Denying Our Self and Exercising Our Spirit

"In a recent prayer meeting I was very happy that we did not start with a hymn. We simply started to pray. Sometimes to not use any hymns will take us to the highest heavens. Eventually some hymns were called, but they were an interruption to the meeting. At that time I myself chose a hymn only to help bring us back. Sometimes we have to follow in the wrong direction to bring people back to the right way. This is what the Lord did with those two disciples on the way to Emmaus. However, we simply should have prayed, perhaps even until midnight. What a bondage traditional knowledge is. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, release, and freedom (2 Cor. 3:17)." (*W. Lee, Dealing with Our Inward Parts for the Growth in Life, Chapter 9, Section 3, LSM*)

On Service

Having an Interest in the Young People

“This is what the Lord Jesus did that day on the way to Emmaus. The Lord asked the two disciples, saying, ‘What are these words which you are exchanging with one another while you are walking?’ (Luke 24:17). One of them replied, ‘Do You alone dwell as a stranger in Jerusalem and not know the things which have taken place in it in these days?’ (v. 18). Of course, the Lord Jesus was very clear, but He still asked them, ‘What things?’ (v. 19). They talked a great deal, and the Lord Jesus just listened patiently. They were walking downhill, and the Lord Jesus just walked with them. In the end, however, the Lord opened their eyes, and they turned around. Brothers and sisters, I believe that you all know what I mean by these words. Do you want to help the young people? Then, first of all you need to be interested in them. Do not be concerned first about their mistakes; do not condemn them at all. You should give them a feeling that you are their good friend, that you sympathize with them, and that you are interested in them and in their affairs. This is the chief point.” (*W. Lee, How to Lead the Young People, Chapter 1, Section 4, LSM*)

Not Making Demands on Others or Judging Them Superficially, but Knowing Them according to Their Deeper Condition

“We often expect that others will change according to our concept and standard. Rather, we should always go along with others; then there will be no problems.... On the day of resurrection two disciples were going down to Emmaus. When the Lord Jesus joined them, He did not say, ‘You are going the wrong way. This bothers Me, and I cannot go along with you unless you turn around. Since you are My disciples, you should go along with Me.’ In terms of right or wrong, those two disciples were wrong. However, the Lord Jesus did not say anything about it. Instead, as they were going down, He went down also (Luke 24:13-15). Then He acted as one who did not know anything, asking, ‘What are these words which you are exchanging with one another while you are walking?’ (v. 17).... To be sure, Jesus knew much better than they did. If we were the Lord Jesus, we might have said, ‘Do you not know who I am? I am that person whom you are talking about.’ Instead, the Lord Jesus simply went along with them to a certain place, and when they arrived, they stopped to eat. The Bible does not tell us how, but at that time their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. Then the Lord disappeared, and the disciples rose up and returned to Jerusalem (vv. 28-33).” (*W. Lee, The Normal Way of Fruit-bearing and Shepherding for the Building Up of the Church, Chapter 7, Section 4, LSM*)

Experiencing the Help of the Spirit in Helping the Saints

“Sometimes the older brothers in the church life are too big, too high. Although they try to help the saints, they do not help them in the saints’ manner. On the day of resurrection, the Lord Jesus came to two disciples who were on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-33). The Lord joined them absolutely in their manner. While they were talking, the Lord Jesus pretended not to know anything. He seemed to ask, ‘What are you talking about?’ The two disciples rebuked Him, ‘Don’t you know the things which have taken place in it in these days?’ The Lord said, ‘What things?’ They said, ‘The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet powerful in work and word before God and all

the people, has been condemned to death and crucified.’ The Lord Jesus neither rebuked them nor revealed Himself to them. He kept Himself in their manner, walking with them until they came near to the village. They asked Him to abide with them and He did. As they were seated in the room, the Lord took bread and broke it. Only then were their eyes opened to see that it was the Lord. When they realized that He was the Lord, He disappeared.... In the church life the older brothers and sisters need to help the younger ones in their manner. They need to join in to help in their weaknesses. None of us is so strong. We all are groaning, expecting, and saying, ‘O Lord, when?’ Day by day we are suffering. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is present, joining in to help us in our manner.” (W. Lee, *Life-Study of Romans, Chapter 19, Section 2, LSM*)

On Character and Virtue

Learning to Be Fine in Character

“In contrasting Luke 19 with Luke 24, we find a marked difference between the Lord's stay at Zaccheus's house and His entering the house with the two disciples who were on the way to Emmaus. The Lord volunteered to enter Zaccheus's house. But in the case of the two disciples, it seems as if He wanted to go on. A fine person will detect two completely different attitudes of the Lord here.... The two disciples on the way to Emmaus knew the Lord already. But they had become backslidden. Although they heard so much from the Lord, they were still heading for Emmaus. This is the reason the Lord acted as though He wanted to go on. He stayed only after they implored Him. In one case, there was a man coming towards the Lord. In the other case, there were two men walking away from the Lord. Accordingly, the Lord's attitude was different. We have to touch the tender feelings of the Lord Jesus before we can realize who Jesus of Nazareth is and who this One is whom God intends to reveal to us.” (W. Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 3) Vol. 54: How to Study the Bible & The Breaking of the Outer Man and the Release of the Spirit, Chapter 5, Section 5, LSM*)

Learning the Forbearance of Christ

“The best word to sum up the totality of Christ's human virtues is forbearance. Besides the Lord Jesus, no human being has ever practiced a life of forbearance. If you read the four Gospels, you will see that the human living of the Lord Jesus was full of forbearance. In particular, the Lord exercised forbearance with His disciples. Consider, for example, how He spoke to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus as recorded in Luke 24. He drew near, went with them, and said to them, ‘What are these words which you are exchanging with one another while you are walking?’ (v. 17). With a rebuking tone, one of the disciples replied, ‘Do you alone dwell as a stranger in Jerusalem and not know the things which have taken place in it in these days?’ (v. 18). Appearing not to know anything, the Lord asked, ‘What things?’ (v. 19). Then they proceeded to tell Him about Jesus of Nazareth, ‘a Prophet, powerful in work and word before God and all the people’ (v. 19) and who was crucified. How forbearing the Lord Jesus was to listen to the disciples speak things that He

knew much better than they did! After walking quite a distance, ‘they drew near to the village where they were going, and He acted as though He would go farther. And they urged Him, saying, Stay with us, because it is toward evening and the day is already nearly over. And He went in to stay with them’ (vv. 28-29), even sitting down to dine with them. When He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, ‘their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him’ (vv. 30-31). In this we surely see Christ’s forbearance. He has the growth in life, the satisfaction in life, and the contentment of life required to have the virtue of forbearance. Therefore, wherever He was He was full of forbearance and He could exercise His forbearance toward all.” (*W. Lee, The Conclusion of the New Testament, (Msgs. 050-062), Chapter 13, Section 2, LSM*)

“When the Lord Jesus walked with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, He displayed forbearance. When He asked them what they were talking about, one of them replied, ‘Do You alone dwell as a stranger in Jerusalem and not know the things which have taken place in it in these days?’ (Luke 24:18). Even though He knew all things, the Lord asked them, ‘What things?’ (v. 19). Then He patiently listened to them while they told Him what had happened. Later, at the appropriate time, the Lord made Himself known to them. He certainly was forbearing with those disciples. If we show forbearance toward others, they will be nourished, healed, and helped to grow. We shall not cause them to stumble or hurt them in any way. However, because of our lack of forbearance, we have damaged others in the church and in our family life.” (*W. Lee, Life-study of Philippians, Chapter 56, Section 4, LSM*)

“The life of the Lord Jesus is the best illustration of forbearance. Consider how He spoke to those two disciples on the way to Emmaus. Luke 24:15 says that while these disciples were ‘talking and discussing, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.’ The Lord Jesus said to them, ‘What are these words which you are exchanging with one another while you are walking?’ (v. 17). With a rebuking tone, one of the disciples answered, ‘Do You alone dwell as a stranger in Jerusalem and not know the things which have taken place in it in these days?’ (v. 18). Appearing not to know anything, the Lord asked, ‘What things?’ (v. 19). Then they proceeded to tell Him about Jesus of Nazareth, One they described as a ‘prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.’ They went on to say that the chief priests and the rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death and crucified Him. How forbearing the Lord was to listen to the disciples speak things which He knew much better than they did! After walking quite a distance, ‘they drew near to the village where they were going, and He acted as though he would go farther’ (v. 28). However, ‘they constrained Him, saying, Stay with us, because it is near evening, and the day is already gone by. And He went in to stay with them.’ (v. 29). The Lord even sat down to dine with them. When He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, ‘their eyes were opened, and they recognized him’ (v. 31). In all this we see the Lord’s forbearance.” (*W. Lee, Life-study of Philippians, Chapter 57, Section 3, LSM*)

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