

Sermon Title: **"How He Had Been Made Known To Them"**

Bible: **Luke 24:28-35**

Where & When: at Gilroy UMC on Sunday, April 26, 2020

Audience: about 28 YouTube Live-streaming viewers

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, you are with us all the time. Please open our eyes to see your presence. Please guide us to experience your love and grace. Please be with my lips in your love and grace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1. The Walk to Emmaus

After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples many times: to two women who felt fear and great joy, to Doubting Thomas, and in today's scripture. This scripture is part of the walk to Emmaus' story. On the day of the resurrection, two disciples walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus. On the road, they were talking about Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus himself joined them. However, somehow, the disciples were not able to recognize Jesus. The NRSV translation of the Bible says that the road is located about seven miles between two villages, Jerusalem and Emmaus. It could be more than a 2-hour walking distance. Even though they had spent time together with Jesus as disciples for about 3 years, they could not recognize Jesus for about 2 hours. Today's scripture begins when they arrived at Emmaus. At the table, Jesus took bread, blessed, broke, and gave it to the disciples. Then, their eyes were opened, and finally

they recognized Jesus! They returned to Jerusalem, and they shared their stories with other disciples about how he had been made known to them.

2. Can We Know Jesus? Or Can We Not Know God?

How can we know Jesus? Can we know Jesus? Because we know of Jesus, many people talk about, write about, and draw Jesus. We have a lot of beautiful hymns and praises. We have four gospels and many theological books. Even today, many theologians and preachers have published a lot of articles and books. Every Sunday, every church has a special and unique message about Jesus. We also enjoy many great arts. From the early Christians to now, many artists are inspired by the Bible and Jesus. I would like to share some great artworks about the walk to Emmaus.

- “The Road to Emmaus” by Robert Zund in 1877
- “Supper in Emmaus” by Mattias Storm in 1601
- “Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus” by Duccio in 1308-1311
- “The Road to Emmaus” by Altobello Melone in 1516-17
- “Christ as Emmaus” by Rembrandt in 1648
- “Supper at Emmaus” by Caravaggio in 1601
- “Christ appears to the Apostles on the road to Emmaus” Mosaic in 6th century

Which one do you like most? These are all describing the same story, but they are all different.

There is no right or wrong. Each artwork has its own uniqueness, story, and ethos. Jesus in these artworks is portrayed all different ways.

Some people might ask, “Which one is the real Jesus?” The Jesus that we have in our minds cannot be the same Jesus from about 2,000 years ago. The real Jesus cannot be what we imagine. Have you seen the digitally recreated face of Jesus before?

- The Digitally Recreated Face of Jesus by Popular Mechanics in 2002

Do you like this? Probably, this historical and scientific Jesus is not what we expect. Jesus was not that handsome and he was neither a Caucasian nor a Korean. So, in some ways, we cannot know Jesus, as the disciples on the road to Emmaus were not able to recognize Jesus, even with their own eyes. As we cannot see Jesus with our eyes, it can be difficult to know Jesus as who he is, beyond our own bias, culture, or context. Rather than talking about Jesus, it can seem more objective and practical to talk about church history, church education, church ministries, and church rules and policies, more like some other religious groups or non-profit organizations.

3. God’s Revelation

Then, can we know Jesus? Or can we not know Jesus? In today’s scripture, when Jesus reveals Himself, the disciples could know Jesus. When there is Jesus’ revelation, we can know Jesus. As soon as they recognized Jesus, Jesus disappeared. However, the disciples’ eyes were opened, and they re-discovered Jesus on the road to Emmaus, saying “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road?” Right away, they got up, returned to Jerusalem and shared the good news with others, “The Lord has risen indeed!” God’s revelation opened their eyes, changed how they saw the past, and led them to take action.

Then, when does God reveal Godself to us? Because I know that God is with us all the time, I will change my question. When can we know God's revelation? At the table in Emmaus, who was a host? Who was a guest? Jesus took bread, blessed, broke, and gave it to the disciples. Jesus was the host at the table. The disciples were the guests. Jesus was not a guest. Jesus is the Lord. When we accept Jesus as our Lord, our eyes are opened. We can feel God's presence. We can listen to God's silence. We can discover God's grace.

Maybe, in this unknown time, it is difficult to recognize Jesus in our life, as we are caught in the way of this new invisible virus season. As the two disciples could not recognize Jesus on the road, we might not be able to see Jesus. Like the empty tomb, we can feel God's absence. Later, we might discover Jesus, who is walking beside us. Maybe, we see only ourselves, the virus, or the problems in front of us. Then, we cannot see Jesus right next to us. Please remember that Jesus is still our Lord to us. Even though we are weak, vulnerable, and broken in this suffering, God is always with us.

Closing Prayer

Oh, Lord, sometimes, we do not recognize you. Please have mercy on us. Please be our host. Please be our Lord and lead us to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Questions.

1. Can we know God? Or can we not know God?
2. Can you share your experience of God's revelation or God's moment?