



The Methodist Church

Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit

Worship at Home Sunday May 1st 2022

Welcome

There are some believers who seem to have only amazing and incredible encounters with God. It seems that these people are singled out for a special blessing of a great encounter. The type that the Disciples had in the upper room, or Cleopas and his friend has on the Emmaus Road, or Thomas had a week later,

But my life is not like that. And if we are honest, it's not that way for most of us, we don't often encounter Jesus in that way. We all desire to, and I am sure that from time to time we all do, but if we are honest, it's not the story of our lives. And that is OK.

I take great comfort in what Jesus said to Thomas.

John 20:29

*Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me.
Blessed are those who believe without seeing me."*

So, today I want to explore Jesus in the everyday life that we all lead and to help with that we are going to hear of the Third encounter some of the Disciples had with Jesus.

Prayer

Lord be with us as we worship together today, reading, listening on our own or meeting together. Your name be praised

Hymn StF - 36 - There's a quiet understanding

<https://youtu.be/DTfESpt74lg>

There's a quiet understanding
When we're gathered in the Spirit
It's a promise that He gives us
When we gather in His name
There's a love we feel in Jesus
There's a manna that He feeds us
It's a promise that He gives us
When we gather in His name

And we know when we're together
Sharing love and understanding

That our brothers and our sisters
Feel the oneness that He brings
Thank You, thank You, thank You, Jesus
For the way You love and feed us
For the many ways You lead us
Thank You, thank You, Lord

Tedd Smith

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Prayer

It's been a long week and we need you now more than ever. Lord, direct our hearts and minds towards you, and fill us with your Spirit, bringing refreshing, renewal, peace, and joy.

Thank you that your ways are far greater than our ways and your thoughts far deeper than our thoughts. Thank you that you had a plan to redeem you people. Thank you that you make all things new. Thank you that your face is towards the righteous, you are close to the brokenhearted, you hear our prayers, and know our hearts. Thank you for your daily, powerful presence in our lives, that we can be assured, no matter what we're facing, and your ears are open to our prayers. Thank you that you surround us with favour as with a shield, and we are safe in your care.

We give you praise and honour for your ways are righteous and true. We give you worship for you are holy and just. We will declare that your love stands firm forever, for your lovingkindness endures forever.

Forgive us for letting fear and worry control our minds and for allowing pride and selfishness to take over our lives. Forgive us for not following your ways and for living distanced from your presence, and bring us once again closer to you

Reading John 21, 1 - 19

Jesus' Third Appearance to the Disciples

After this, Jesus revealed Himself again to His disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed Himself in this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (called "Twin"), Nathanael from Cana of Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of His disciples were together.

"I'm going fishing," Simon Peter said to them.

"We're coming with you," they told him. They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. When daybreak came, Jesus stood on the shore. However, the disciples did not know it was Jesus.

"Men," Jesus called to them, "you don't have any fish, do you?"

"No," they answered.

"Cast the net on the right side of the boat," He told them, "and you'll find some." So they did, and they were unable to haul it in because of the large number of fish. Therefore the disciple, the one Jesus loved, said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"

When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tied his outer garment around him (for he was stripped) and plunged into the sea. But since they were not far from land (about 100 yards away), the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish. When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish lying on it, and bread.

"Bring some of the fish you've just caught," Jesus told them. So, Simon Peter got up and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish – 153 of them. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn.

"Come and have breakfast," Jesus told them. None of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?" because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish.

This was now the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.

Jesus' Threefold Restoration of Peter
When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said to Him, "You know that I love You."

"Feed My lambs," He told him.

A second time He asked him, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

"Yes, Lord," he said to Him, "You know that I love You."

"Shepherd My sheep," He told him.

He asked him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

Peter was grieved that He asked him the third time, "Do you love Me?" He said,

"Lord, You know everything! You know that I love You."

"Feed My sheep," Jesus said.

Before we think about this encounter between Jesus and the Disciples let's sing again.

StF 462 Come with me, come wander,

https://youtu.be/MdFVsRAnA_o

Come with me come wander
Come welcome the world
Where strangers might smile
Or where stones may be hurled
Come leave what you cling to
Lay down what you clutch
And find with hands empty
That hearts can hold much
Chorus

Sing hey for the carpenter leaving His tools
Sing hey for the Pharisees leaving their rules
Sing hey for the fishermen leaving their nets
Sing hey for the people who leave their regrets

Come walk in my company
Come sleep by my side
Come savour a lifestyle
With nothing to hide
Come sit at my table
And eat with my friends
Discovering that love
Which the world never ends

Chorus

Come share in my laughter
Come close to my fears
Come find yourself washed
With the kiss of my tears
Come stand close at hand
While I suffer and die
And find in three days
How I never shall lie

Chorus

Come leave your possessions
Come share out your treasure
Come give and receive
Without method or measure
Come loose every bond
That's resisting the Spirit
Enabling the earth
To be yours to inherit

Graham Maule | John L. Bell

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Reflection

If you read the Gospel of John, it looks like chapter 21 was added after John finished writing the gospel, but it is accepted that John added this at a later date, possibly because this is one of the 'Many things that would fill a book' that he felt needed to be said.

It also looks like the disciples had gone back to a normal way of life too. Not just after He had appeared to them in the upper room with Thomas.

Well to explain this we need to look at Jesus' instruction to them at the end of Matthew - "Go to Galilee and you will see me".

So they were actually obeying Jesus by being by the Sea of Galilee. But Jesus didn't tell them when or how they would see him and so I guess they waited for a few days, then decided to set to and do what they knew how to do until He appeared.

So here we are. Peter and the disciples were fishing. Perhaps Peter felt that that was all he could do. After all, the last few weeks had not been good for him. He had denied Jesus, he had run away, he had lied, he had hidden in a room with a locked door. Even though he loved Jesus, and always would, he had failed him. He hadn't saved him, he hadn't prevented his death, and finally he had denied him.

All he could do was fish. Was it to take his mind off what had happened? Or something else that made him go out and fish? We don't know of course. Peter wasn't alone either there were 7 other disciples with him. This seems like it's just another day, and ordinary activity, fishing, going about their work.

And to cap it all it was a bad day for fishing. Can you imagine Peter's state of mind? He, the expert fisherman. After all that had happened, he can't even catch fish. I think that if I were him, I would not have been in a good mood. Certainly not to get advice

from someone 100yards away who was clearly not a fisherman.

Now we know that this unwanted advisor is actually Jesus, but Peter and the others would have no expectation of this. When Jesus appeared to them before, it was where they were gathered, right in the room.

But today it was different. Today it was all about a stranger, walking on a shore in the morning shouting advice to a few fishermen who were trying to go about their business. This was an everyday, normal moment and nothing about it would have indicated that Jesus was present, until one of them recognised Him.

I love this image. And I love it because this is more like my life. This is more like the way I encounter Jesus. Possibly not even realising that He is with me until someone else realises that He is present and makes it known to me.

So I have been trying recognise more when I encounter Jesus in the everyday normal, when I am least expecting Him.

Now I have discovered that it's not that Jesus is in everything that happens to me. The person who let me out of the junction on a busy road was just that, a nice person. Most probably not Jesus. And that for most of my time I can just be happy that I know Jesus is around. But as I think in this way I am discovering that, maybe 3 or 4 times a month I can be quite sure that at that moment, Jesus has been especially present.

An example of this happened to me about ago. Someone we knew from part of Lynn's past managed to get in touch as they were coming to Masham and they remembered that Lynn lives near there.

We arranged to meet up for a walk. I had met David maybe only 3 or 4 times at a fellowship Lynn was part of, but as David and I walked and chatted we really became connected and we discussed evangelism, faith, building congregations, planting churches. We bounced ideas around for

post pandemic church and what that could look like.

You know, on the face of it, it was just a couple of believers having a nice, normal walk discussing things of faith. An every day moment.

But in reality, we realised that it was much more than that. Jesus was also present in a very real way, prompting questions, providing answers, guiding our conversation to the things that are important to Him.

It may be the closest I get to feeling like Cleopas did on the Emmaus road. Our hearts were on fire as we spoke, just like for Cleopas and his friend Jesus was very present in that every day moment for David and me.

What I am trying to say is that we can all encounter Jesus much more often than I think we think we can.

A moment when we feel lifted by seeing a beautiful flower, or a bird hovering. A moment when we feel a lift in our heart for no reason, that time when we were feeling low, and someone in the street just smiled at us and lifted our spirit. Or when we get into a lovely conversation with a friend, and we laugh with real joy.

These can be real Jesus in the 'every day'

And as we learn to see Jesus in the everyday perhaps some of those moments may turn into amazing encounters with Him

I wonder if that would have been so if John had not said to Peter 'it is the Lord'? Would Peter have been annoyed at being given advice by a stranger on the 'normal day' and disregarded the stranger, turn his boat to port and never eaten breakfast with Jesus and had that so very important conversation.

For Peter that 'everyday' moment turned into an amazing encounter as he was forgiven three times and put back in the place Jesus knew him to be when he called him Peter.

So I want to encourage us all to look for Jesus in the everyday, I know that you'll find him so much more often than you ever thought you might, and perhaps some of those moment will allow Jesus to show you so much more of him and who you are to be too.

And that is so encouraging for you, and when you tell others about your encounter, it encourages us all too.

Lord help us to see you more and more in the everyday
Amen.

Prayers of intercession

A moment when we offer up to God those He has placed on our hearts.

Just mention their name, take a moment to reflect and know that God knows their needs.

Hymn StF 451 Open the eyes of my heart Lord

<https://youtu.be/idQ1n3cdgfoChorus>

Open the eyes of my heart Lord
Open the eyes of my heart
I want to see You
I want to see You

Verse

To see You high and lifted up
Shining in the light of Your glory
Pour out Your power and love
As we sing holy holy holy

Holy holy holy
Holy holy holy
Holy holy holy
I want to see You

Paul Baloche

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Blessing

May God bless us all with a new eye to see Him in all we encounter each day this week.