

# "Some, but Not All"

Text: Luke 24:13-18,25-29

**"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."** (Jude 1:24-25)

Dear Fellow Christians:

There is a time for "some" and a time for "all." When you pack for a trip, you take some of your clothes, not all. When you go to a buffet, you eat some of what is offered, hopefully not all. The opposite is also true. When you marry, you promise faithfulness at *all* times, not just *some*. When your wife wants to have a heart-to-heart talk, I suggest you give her *all* of your attention, not just *some*. You can expect problems every time you are supposed to give one and opt instead for the other. Spending your time playing *some* golf good, *all* golf bad. Some relaxation good, all relaxation makes you a lazy slob.

Keep this thought in mind as we join two men on a lonely, fearful walk recorded in our text for this morning. They were utterly dejected and afraid, for in their minds they had been abandoned. Their minds and their eyes told them that they had been forsaken by their Teacher, their Savior, their Lord. Theirs was a problem of *some* when it should have been *all*. If their mistake had not been corrected, the results would have been utterly, eternally catastrophic. We read their story in the 24<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Gospel of Luke, beginning there with the 13<sup>th</sup> Verse:

<sup>ESV</sup> **Luke 24:13-18, 25-29** *That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup> and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. <sup>16</sup> But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup> And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup> Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" <sup>25</sup> And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" <sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in*

*all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. <sup>28</sup> ¶ So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, <sup>29</sup> but 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.*

This is God's Word. With complete confidence in the origin of these words, and with absolute confidence in the promise of the power of these words in our own hearts and lives, so we pray, **"Sanctify us by your truth, O Lord. Your Word is truth."** Amen.

What do you imagine comes to the minds of unbelievers when they hear "Christian"? Most picture simple fools that have been drawn into some mindless, semi-fanatic, woefully outdated cult – someone that is completely detached from any true sense of reality. You and I demonstrate that "foolishness" by actually *believing* everything that the Bible tells us – including miracles, six-day creation, and the resurrection of the dead. *We* believe that we are God's special children and heirs of heaven, because that's what we are told in God's Word, but that in turn means that *they* believe we are delusional – at best.

So who's right and who's wrong? You and I have no doubt, but that in itself does not make it so. God makes it so, and he will announce his truth to the world on his great Day of Judgment. Unlike those who deny the Christian faith, you and I know that we have no fear of facing our God as his "fools" – as miserable sinners who took him at his Word and based our only hope for salvation on the "foolishness" of the forgiveness that is ours not by what we do or don't do, but through faith alone in Jesus Christ.

When you truly come to understand unbelievers, you come to realize just how diametrically opposed human wisdom is to faith in general, and to the gospel in particular. In spiritual unseen matters of faith, man's eyes deceive him more often than they help.

This was at least part of the problem that weighed down those two men in our text for this morning on the road to Emmaus. Their own personal world, their own reality, had been shaped by what they had *seen*, by what they had *experienced*. Our text gives us the impression that they were absolutely fascinated by the man who walked with them those seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus, but their eyes and their minds dictated their understanding, their perception of reality. Even though they didn't yet recognize the risen Jesus, they were clearly

captivated by their conversation with him. Later they described what they had experienced: **"Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"**

Yet they didn't know it was Jesus at first, did they? In fact what they had seen with their eyes caused them to make that catastrophic mistake recorded in our text. The first reaction of Cleopas, one of the two, was more or less to disparage Jesus as ignorant: **"Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"** In other words, in the humble opinion of Cleopas, he himself was privy to the truth, but the Son of God and Savior of the World was steeped in ignorance. His diagnosis of the situation: *"I am knowledgeable, you are uninformed."* I have little doubt that the two were about to attempt to disabuse Jesus of his ignorance as they walked with him along the road.

This is actually the normal reaction of man to God's truth, *until* God reveals his higher truth to man's sin-addled heart and mind, and then grants acceptance of that truth through his creation of faith. The faithless *might* acknowledge the existence of a wisdom greater than their own, but then they naturally *dismiss* God's wisdom when it conflicts with their experience. God is wise and powerful, but it's just silly to talk about sick people being healed by Peter's shadow, or of human beings actually walking on water, or of priests being fed by ravens during a prolonged drought. Human beings are all ears when God wants to reveal a "higher consciousness," but not when that higher consciousness contradicts their own experience. Only the Holy Spirit can change that.

So it was that Jesus talked as the three walked, and Cleopas and his companion quickly learned that Jesus was not the one who lacked understanding. Jesus wasn't ignorant; they were – right up until the best part of this account when Jesus removed their ignorance by the power of his words. The same words, by the way, that you and I have still today.

Understand just how silly those words of Jesus would have sounded to those two men had the words not been mixed with faith. *With their own eyes* they had seen – *seen* – the death and burial of their Lord. They had witnessed his apparent helplessness, defeat, and death. They had observed Jesus' crucifixion, and as far they knew he was still dead – along with all their hopes and aspirations.

And then here comes this man, this stranger, who was so out of it that he apparently didn't even know what had just happened in Jerusalem, and he dares to call *them* ignorant? **"O foolish ones,"** he said to them, **"and**

**slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"** This "ignorant" man nonetheless went on to tell them things like: **"Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"**

The problem with Cleopas and his companion was that they had chosen "some" instead of "all." They were followers of Jesus, but they had chosen to listen to and believe only *some* of what he had told them, not all. Jesus identified the problem when he said to them, **"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"** Here's the nub of the problem addressed by our text this morning. Clearly they believed only *some* of what the Prophets had spoken. They evidently believed the parts about the Messiah being mighty and powerful, but they took it upon themselves to define just how he would demonstrate that power. They knew and readily accepted the parts that agreed with *their sense* of what *should* be – the parts that spoke of the Christ coming in glory and ruling Israel and defending her from all her enemies – but that is all they saw. Their eyes and minds were filled with their own images of the way things ought to be. They rather conveniently overlooked the many passages where *God* revealed *his* wisdom and *his* truth. Thus they dismissed the Scriptures that foretold his suffering, shame and humiliation. Isaiah spoke of a Messiah **"smitten and afflicted,"** one who was **"pierced for our transgressions...and crushed for our iniquities."** One who would heal us **"by his wounds."** Jesus himself had told them, over and over again, exactly what was going to happen to him – including his all-important death and resurrection. In other words, it was all there for them to know and believe, and yet they had evidently chosen to exclude certain parts of God's Word from their personal expectations. To them it was undoubtedly just small parts – no big deal – and yet the result was so powerful that they didn't even recognize their Savior as he walked and talked with them.

Tragically, this is clearly the trend today, and the threat comes both from without and within. We expect nothing more from unbelievers, but the decay from within is appalling. Entire Christian denominations have given themselves over to "some" rather than "all." Some of the Bible is inspired truth, but not all. Some parts are applicable, but not all. God is serious about some of what he told us, but not all.

This whole question of "some, but not all" might have seemed like a small thing to those two men, but was it a "small thing" for them? Did God consider it a small thing? As far as those two disciples on the Road to Emmaus were concerned, for a time it may have cost them

their faith in their Savior. A Savior that remains dead is no Savior, which means that their problem was anything but inconsequential. It took a special visit from that Savior **"explaining to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself"** to turn them around so that they might know and believe the truth.

How many "small omissions" or compromises would it take before *our* faith is destroyed? No one should want to test that boundary. Jesus himself told us that just a little bit of yeast permeates the whole batch of dough – meaning that, given a chance, even a small error eventually takes over the whole, not the other way around. That's why in his Great Commission he told us to **"teach them all things, whatsoever I have commanded you."**

Do not allow yourself to be pulled into this soul-destroying trap. Take hold of every last word of the "foolish ignorance" of God's Word. The saving truths to which we cling have been given to us by our God. He has spelled it all out for us in his Word - point by point, teaching by teaching, doctrine by doctrine. Bind yourself, blissfully, to the full council of God's Holy Word.

Those disciples did get it right in the end, didn't they? They were shown a different way, a far better way, and that far better way was simply to urge their Savior to **"abide with them, for the day is almost over."** The key for them is the same for you and me today: we *never* want to be separated from our one valid and reliable source for temporal help and eternal salvation, imagining that we know better. Jesus himself once assured us: **"If you remain in my Word, then you are my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** We absolutely cannot afford to get this wrong, ever. Our only course of action then is to draw him ever closer – to know and cling to him as the starting point and essence of true wisdom, trusting that **"the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."** The solution is to trust this Lord Jesus to be the center of our lives – the core of who we are and what we are all about.

When that is *our* confidence, *our* reality, we possess this tremendous comfort from our text: As our Lord Jesus once **"went in to stay with them (those two disciples)"** on the road to Emmaus, so also our Lord Jesus will most certainly *abide with us* as we wait for him to call us home. As he once gave such great hope and comfort to those troubled disciples on the road to Emmaus, so he also most certainly holds out to each one of us the same hope and the same comfort. Yet we cannot expect to receive and possess such hope and comfort by holding to some of what our God has told us, but not all.

To the world, such divine truth will always carry the appearance of ignorance, yet you and I have now been given to know the mysteries of the gospel, and to rejoice in the forgiveness of our sins, won for us by our Savior on the cross. So then with hearts now freed from our former ignorance and guilt, this then is our one great desire: *Abide with us, Lord Jesus, now and for all eternity. You have paid the full debt for our sins; come quickly and rescue us from this vale of tears and carry us to the heavenly existence you have prepared for us. Amen.*

ESV **Acts 2:14a, 36-41** But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: <sup>36</sup> ...Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." <sup>37</sup> ¶ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" <sup>38</sup> And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." <sup>40</sup> And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." <sup>41</sup> So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

ESV **1 Peter 1:17-21** And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, <sup>18</sup> knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. <sup>20</sup> He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you <sup>21</sup> who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

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# ST PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

# ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**The Second Sunday after Easter – April 23, 2023**

## The Opening Prayer by the Pastor

## The Opening Hymn – 292 (Stanzas 1-7) (Red Hymnal)

"Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide"

## The Order of Morning Service – Brown Hymnal page 12.

## The Scripture Lessons: (Printed on the back of the bulletin)

**The New Testament Lesson:** (Acts 2:14a, 36-41) Using the Law as God intends it to be used will never be easy; but it is necessary. Note here how Peter used the Law to bring the Pentecost day crowd to repentance. Only then could the gospel do its saving work. Note also how those that felt remorse for their sins immediately assumed that they had to do something to save themselves. Peter's answer contrasted sharply with their question. Man could not do anything. Something had to be done for, or worked in, man, and the Holy Spirit was the only One who could do what needed to be done.

## The Psalm of the Day – Psalm 51 (Page 31)

**The Epistle Lesson:** (1 Peter 1:17-21) As our first Scripture lesson gave us the spoken words of Peter, our second lesson gives us words from his pen. Once again in this reading we find both law and gospel. Note especially the severity of our sin (the payment for which had to come from the Son of God) and rejoice also that that Son has paid the penalty in full.

## The Confession of Faith -

The Nicene Creed – (Projected on screens)

## The Pre-Sermon Hymn – 245 (Red Hymnal)

"God Loved the World So that He Gave"

## The Sermon – Text: Luke 24:13-18, 25-29 (Printed on the back page)

**"Some, but Not All"**

## The Offertory – (Supplement page 16 insert)

## The Prayers

## The Pre-Communion Hymn – 307 (Red Hymnal)

"Draw Nigh and Take the Body of the Lord"

## The Preparation for Holy Communion (Brown Hymnal page 17)

## The Distribution

## The Nunc Dimittis and Thanksgiving (Brown Hymnal page 20)

## The Benediction

## The Closing Hymn – 292 (Stanzas 8-9) (Red Hymnal)

"Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide"

## Silent Prayer

**Welcome!** - We warmly welcome any visitors worshipping with us this morning and invite you to join us each Sunday at this time. We are glad you are here!  
**To our Visitors seeking Holy Communion** – In obedience to God's Word, we practice "Close Communion." This practice stresses both our concern for others, not wanting anyone to receive the sacrament to their harm (1 Cor. 11:27-30) and the importance of unity in confession and faith (1 Cor. 10:16-17). For this reason we ask that anyone who has not established this unity through membership in a CLC congregation please meet with the pastor to discuss this Scriptural doctrine before communing. This is a practice that we follow out of love and concern for you, and out of obedience to God's Word, not in judgment of anyone's Christian faith.

## Attendance – Sunday (30) Average (42)

### This Week at St. Paul:

<b>Today</b>	<b>-9:00 a.m.</b>	– Sunday School and Bible Class
	<b>-10:00 a.m.</b>	– Worship Service w/Holy Communion
	<b>-11:15 a.m.</b>	– Fellowship Hour
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>-6:00 p.m.</b>	– Confirmation Class
	<b>-7:00 p.m.</b>	– Midweek Bible Study
<b>Next Sunday</b>	<b>-9:00 a.m.</b>	– Sunday School and Bible Class
	<b>-10:00 a.m.</b>	– Worship Service
	<b>-11:00 a.m.</b>	– Fellowship Hour
	<b>-11:15 a.m.</b>	– Outreach Committee Meeting

**CLC News** – Seminary graduate Jonah Albrecht has received the calls to Ascension of Tacoma and Redemption of Lynnwood. Teacher graduate Stephen Krause has received the call to Grace of Valentine. He has accepted that call.

**Outreach Committee Meeting** – The Outreach Committee is scheduled to meet during the fellowship hour next Sunday.

**Music Festival** – All those interested in sharing their talent as part of our May 7<sup>th</sup> Music Festival are asked to meet in the sanctuary during the fellowship hour this morning.

**Easter Flowers** – All who purchased Easter flowers are still invited to take theirs home with them this morning.

**Delegate Conference** – This year's West-Central Delegate Conference is scheduled for May 23-25 in Watertown, SD. We are in need of two delegates to represent St Paul.