



## Hope that doesn't disappoint – Ian France – 20.8.2023



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30:06



### Scripture

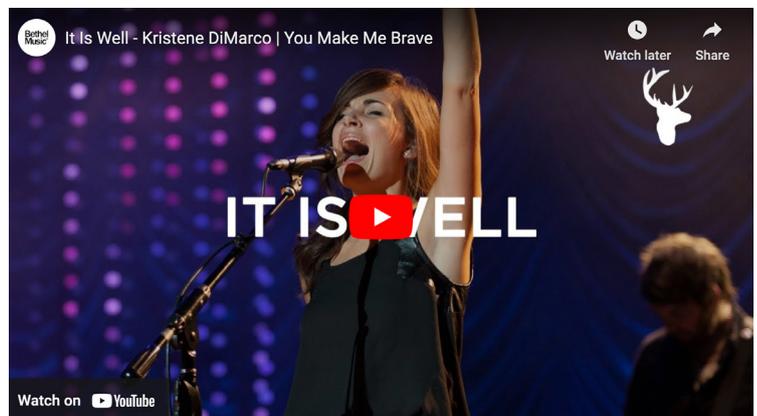
Luke 24:13-35

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

### Observation

It was inevitable that the two disciples walking home to Emmaus from Jerusalem on that night would be talking about what had happened in the city. They were not numbered among the twelve but were ordinary people – whether two men or husband and wife. Yet Jesus came to them as they journeyed. The specific location of Emmaus is uncertain but it was probably about 12 kilometres from the city. It is likely that Luke received a first-hand account of what happened on that afternoon as the story is a personal one.



It Is Well - Kristene DiMarco | You Make Me Brave

The events of the last few days were heavy on the travellers' minds and yet they, for some reason, did not recognise Jesus when He joined them. Perhaps He had walked with them for a while just listening to them without joining in their conversation. At last He asked His question. They were surprised that He did not know about the events that had happened which were so important to them. When He asked them to elaborate, they did not need further prompting and told Him all about what had occurred and why they were so sad.

They told Him what they knew about Jesus – and then went on to share how their hopes had been dashed. They had hoped He would redeem Israel but now He was dead – although some women had said they had seen Him alive. However they dismissed this claim by the women as insignificant. Whatever anyone else said – they had not seen Him themselves – therefore they found it hard to believe any of the rumours could be true.

Jesus, commenting on their slowness to believe, then unpacked all the Scriptures that concerned Him including the fact that the prophets had said that the Messiah would suffer and then be glorified (eg Isaiah 53:3-5; 50:5-7. Daniel 9:26; and Zechariah 12:10 etc). This must have been the most spectacular Bible study ever delivered for He told them everything that the Old Testament said about the Messiah culminating in the cross.

When the travellers reached their destination it seemed as if Jesus would continue on the road. But they wanted to spend more time with Him, even though they still did not recognise Him. The word 'constrained' indicates that they may have grasped His cloak or His hand to urge Him to stay with them.

These two had not been present at the Last Supper so they had no idea of the significance the breaking of the bread had. Yet it was this simple, everyday act of breaking and sharing bread that opened their eyes and made them realise their companion was Jesus Himself. Scripture does not say how this happened, but perhaps they saw the scars in His hands that made them understand at last who He was.

He disappeared then. Yet, looking back, they both realised they had felt in their hearts, as they burned within them, that this was Jesus – they just did not understand how it could have been Him.

They did not hesitate but returned to the city. Now they had good news to tell and they probably made this second journey more rapidly than the first one. Now their hearts were glad. None of the disciples doubted what they said, for Simon too had seen the Messiah!

*Icebreaker:*

How do you feel when the team you support does not win an important match?

What word describes your feelings most clearly? Does it make any difference to you if you watch the game or are just told the result? Why do you think you feel so strongly about such things?

### **Application.**

- Have you ever been disappointed in God? Why? In hindsight, was it a good thing your hope was not fulfilled? How do you feel about this situation now?
- 'Hope is a risky business.' What risky global hope do you hold close to your heart at this point in time? How would you feel if it happened? How would you feel if it did not happen? How do other members of the group feel?
- Are you an optimist, a realist or a pessimist? Why do you describe yourself in this way? Have you found this to be a good thing in your life? Why/why not?
- Choose a story that is current in the news. Brainstorm as to how an optimist, a realist and a pessimist would tell that story. Can we have hope anyway however we look at it?
- 'When we put our hope in God we trust timelines and details to God'. Do you? Or do you help Him along? How can we grow our trust in God when the fulfillment of what we hope for is not evident?
- 'Our hope is centred on Jesus Christ'. Is Jesus Christ the source of your hope? What struggles do you have, if any with this idea? How would acknowledging this help you to hold onto hope in any situation you are facing at this time?
- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

### **Prayer**

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

### **Service**

Ask God to reveal to you any situations in your circle where hope seems to be dim and to give you the words or the actions to help reignite hope for those around you. Be prepared to share with the group what happened when you meet again.

### **Bibliography**

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/luke-24/>