

I'm only going one way!

Luke 24:13-35

April 8, 2018

Have you ever found yourself driving down a one way road and the arrow was pointing the opposite way you were driving? I've been there and done that. My navigator, my wife, pointed out to me that I was going down a one way street the wrong way. I gave her the most common response to this error in going the wrong way on a one way road, "**I'm only going one way!**" It didn't go over well with my wife nor would I think it would go very far with a police officer if I had been caught that day going the wrong way on a one way.

In our reading today we found two guys who were going the wrong way on a one way. I want us to go with them and discover what they discovered that day. When you are only going one way it can still be: **The Wrong Way**...The Broad Way or The Recognition Way.

The two had been in Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. They had heard about Jesus being falsely accused and crucified a few days earlier. They were on their way back to the town of Emmaus, which was about a 7 mile walk West from Jerusalem. They were heading the wrong way...not so much because they were heading West, but rather because they were going away from who they needed to be heading towards.

What caused them to go the wrong way? They were **distracted by disappointment!**

They were more focused on their disappointments and problems. The two men, like many that week in Jerusalem, were counting on Jesus to redeem Israel. They were looking to Him to rescue their nation from its enemies.

Most people believed that the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah were about him conquering the military and political enemies. They didn't recognize that he was to rescue them from their slavery to sin.

With the death of Jesus, they headed down **Disappointment Drive**. They were so downcast that Jesus didn't deliver. They were disturbed that they had put their hope in Jesus and their hope was crucified and dead.

They were so disappointed, downcast and disturbed that they didn't even recognize Jesus when he walked up alongside them. They shared with this stranger their disappointment that God had not pulled through for them.

To compound the problem of their journey, they were walking in the wrong direction. They were going the wrong way in the way they should have been going to get the hope they were searching for that day. The wrong way was going away from the fellowship of the believers in Jerusalem. They had let go of hope and were going back to their old way of life.

Have you ever found yourself walking down the wrong way on a one way to hope and healing in life? What happens? We experience a disappointment in life. We thought God would get us out of it. I meet people who allow me to walk with them down that one way the wrong way. The common thread seems to be disappointment and a downcast spirit. A tragedy occurred to them or someone they loved and they are furious with God. They thought God would get them the rescue they had hoped for. Instead, death or poor choices led them down the wrong way of disappointment and a disturbed life. They turned their back on the One who could see them through. They walked away from family, friends and faith; the very one's who could have helped them through their discouragement.

But then there came a day when someone came alongside them, listened to their story, and then invited them to turn around and head back to their family, friends and faith in Jesus. Some do. Some refuse and continue to go the wrong way on the one way of life.

The psalmist, someone who had walked the wrong way on a one way, realized that the downcast and disturbed are to put their hope in the Lord. (Psalm 42:11)

Back on the wrong way of the one way with the two heading to Emmaus. Still not recognizing Jesus for who he was they shared their discouragement. I love what Jesus told them. As their navigator he called them "***thick-headed and slow hearted.***" (Luke 24:25 Message bible) He told them how foolish they were to not believe what the prophets had said about the Messiah. Jesus then walked them down the prophecies about the Messiah being the Way. He most likely shared from passages such as Genesis 3, 12; Psalms 22, 69, 110; Zechariah 9,13; Malachi 3.

Why did Jesus call them foolish? They were going the wrong way down the one way journey in life. They failed to understand that all the suffering Jesus went through was to bring them to the point of finding healing and hope in life. The two were unprepared for this good news because they were unprepared for the reverse values of God's kingdom.

This brings us to the second way along the one way of this journey of faith today.

The Broad Way is a wide super highway! It is the way of the majority. It is the way of culture's values. It is the way that Jesus said many would travel. He also described it as the wrong way. He directed his followers to go a different way...the Narrow Way! (Matthew 7:13-14) He told them that He was the Way. (John 14:6)

The way that leads to life, healing and hope for eternity is a narrow way. This does not mean that it is difficult to become a Christian, to walk this way. But there is only one way to live with God and only a few decide to walk that way with Jesus. Believing in Jesus is the Way to the Father because Jesus is the only one who died for our sins. He is the resurrected Messiah...not a dead prophet. Living His way may not be popular or easy but it is possible and He will journey with us each step of the way. Thank God there is a way to God!

We are given the choice to walk the Broad Way of today's values or the narrow way of Jesus' kingdom values. God promises that as soon as we set our foot on the way, He'll show us our salvation. (Psalm 50:23)

After a 7 mile journey of talking the two invited the stranger to stay with them for dinner. Jesus agreed. It was over dinner that the two who had been journeying down Wrong Way and Broad Way find themselves on **Recognition Way**.

Do you remember what sign they saw that made them realize they had been going the wrong way on a one way journey in life? It was not a road sign. It was a common loaf of bread. When Jesus took the bread, he did with it as he had done a few days earlier at the Passover meal with his disciples...He blessed it, broke it and gave it! (Luke 22:19)

At that moment the eyes of the two were opened. They recognized Jesus! They were open-eyed...wide eyed! They recognized Jesus...all through the loaf of bread he blessed, broke and gave to them. They discovered Jesus in **the common daily!**

Here is where I pray the spirit of our journey with Jesus is open-eyed...wide-eyed!

As we walk the way with Jesus we are to prayerfully see him in the common daily. We travel down this way daily. Are we able to recognize Jesus in the common daily?

At our recent Maundy Thursday dinner, discussion and communion, I saw Jesus in the common daily of a child whose shoe was not tied. We were all seated around tables in the social hall. I had blessed the bread and it was passed around in a wooden bowl. I then blessed the juice. I had asked this young boy to help pass the elements. As he walked to each table with the tray of juice cups he would say the person's name if he knew them and say, "here you go!"

About a third of the way around I noticed that one of his shoes was untied. I had an internal battle going on. Do I stop him and make him tie his shoe before the next person wore the juice...or do I let him keep going hoping and praying he doesn't trip?

About two-thirds the way around I saw Jesus in that common daily image of a boy with his shoe untied. WE are like that young boy. Jesus entrusts us to take his love to the people we know and don't know. We may trip over the "untied shoes" in our lives. But He still trusts us to show his love, grace, mercy, peace, hope and joy to those we serve in our common daily journey in life.

At that moment I was on Recognition Way! I recognized again that we are trusted to show Jesus to others. We may be the only Jesus they come alongside of on their journey down the wrong way of a one way. Listen to them, then guide them to the way of Jesus. Help them to see Jesus in the common daily of life.

As we journey away from last Sunday, Resurrection Sunday, I pray we will find ourselves on this Recognition Way! If you find yourself going the wrong way stop and turn around. Listen to Jesus' words to you.

If you find yourself on the Broad Way, following the way of the status quo, then turn around and head down the narrow way of Jesus. Follow His way, truth and life.

Recognition Way is the common daily way we are to travel. Pray each day to be open-eyed...wide eyed to Jesus along the way.

Each day we wake up with a choice as to which way we will journey.

Why go the wrong way down a one way? Go the way that will **recognize Jesus in the common daily.**

When confronted by others about the one way you are journeying on in life simply respond:

"I'm only going one way!"