How to Have a Closer Walk with Jesus

Last's Month Sermon:

The Most Ignored Purpose of Christmas – The Gift of Love; detailing our responsibility to love God and to love one another as God has loved us. If you have not heard that message, please check it out today or as soon as possible on YouTube at The GLCTv because today's message builds on it.

Today's Sermon Summarized:

How to Have a Closer Walk with Jesus? Love one another!

The answer to this question may be summed up by two verses of Scripture.

Jn 14:21 (ESV) — 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and <u>I will</u> love him and manifest myself to him."

Jn 14:23 (ESV) — 23 Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

What commandment does Jesus expect us to keep? It is only one.

Jn 15:12 (ESV) — 12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

This, brothers and sisters, is the simple key to having a closer walk with Jesus. Learn to love one another as he has loved us.

I will repeat that so you can see it:

The key to having a closer walk with Jesus is; learn to love one another as he has loved us. Then, he will make his home with us!

There is no excuse for doing this because...:

We were created in the image and likeness of God, so we can, love one another as Christ has loved us... if we will deny ourselves

<u>If we choose</u> to conform to his image we can love as Christ, and because we love as he loved, he will come and walk with us.

How to Have a Closer Walk with Jesus? A Study of the Walk to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35

From this story we will learn three things we must do have a closer walk with Jesus.

- 1) Fellowship with other believers
 - a. to draw Jesus to us to walk with us.
- 2) Talk about Scripture with other believers
 - a. to hear Jesus explain Scripture to us.

- 3) Take communion with other believers
 - a. to get Jesus to reveal more of himself to us.

We will see, Christ, the living word, comes near to two disciples as they walk together to their village. We will see him 1)draw near to them and walk alongside of them, 2) question them to explain Scripture to them, then, 3) sit and have communion with them and clearly reveal himself to them, as they have communion with one another.

This event occurred on Resurrection Sunday evening when two of Jesus disciples are going to a village named Emmaus. They were talking about and questioning the things they had heard at their fellowship with other believers that morning. This gathering of believers would later be known as Church.

This is <u>very</u> important point!

- I. Lk 24:13–35 (ESV) 13 That very day (the day of the resurrection and the empty tomb. This happens in the evening after church) two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.
 - A. How many of them is it? (Two)
 - B. What are they doing? (Walking together)
 - C. Who and what are they talking about? (The events of the day)
 - D. The Scripture makes it plain these two were among the disciples that morning because they went to the tomb and found it empty. (Vs 24)
 - 1. They were in church that morning, and they would go back to church that evening!
 - 2. When they went back to church that evening, they would receive an additional blessing just by being a church!
- II. What does Jesus do while these two are talking together? Two things: 1) draws near, 2) walks with them
 - Lk 24:15 (ESV) 15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.
 - A. While they were talking and discussing together, <u>Jesus himself drew</u> <u>near</u>
 - 1. Jesus initiates the contact! They are not looking for him, but he finds them!
 - What has Jesus told us about when two or more people are gathered in his name talking about him? Mt 18:20 (ESV) — 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."
 - 3. I want you to realize this is the reason it is important for you to come to church. You will have a greater chance of experiencing Christ when you are with other believers.
 - a. Why? Because he said he would be there!

- b. This was his promise! Look at what he said; Here were two people talking about him and he draws near to them.
- 4. Listen, Covid has done us all a disservice. We have allowed the politicians and government to cause us to fear and separate us from one another.
 - a. Everybody has not come back to church yet. They have gotten in the habit of not attending. They have come up with excuse after excuse
 - b. I have heard people say it is too easy to stay in the bed and watch church. I wonder can they tell that to their employer?
 - c. But it is our Lord's command for us to fellowship together.

Attending church is not optional; it is mandatory!

Heb 10:25 (ESV) — 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

d. The Scripture says we should encourage one another. How can you encourage people you don't have contact with?

You should attend church not just to get a blessing but to be a blessing!

- e. We go everywhere else we want to go but we make excuses to get out of going to church.
- f. To have fellowship with other believers is critical to our relationship with Christ. He said to love one another as he has loved us. He demonstrated his love that while we were still sinners, he gave his life for us.

If you cannot fellowship with other believers you are lacking in love, not them!

- g. We must learn to love like him and seek out relationships with our fellow believers whether they want a relationship with us or not. It is a Christlike thing to do!
- h. We are to love them like he loves them!

 Ro 13:8 (ESV) 8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.
- Now, see how fellowship with other believers can produce blessings we don't anticipate!
 Mal 3:16–18 (ESV) — 16 Then those who feared the Lord spoke

with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name.

17 "They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.

18 Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

- a. When does God make this distinction? When the believers come together! Verse 16
 - (1) The book is written before him. They don't even know he is storing up blessings for them because they are fellowship thing together.
 - (2) The Scripture said there is a day that is coming that God will make them his treasured possession.
 - (a) Why are we willing to miss out on the great blessing that God will have for us as something he treasures?
- b. We truly need each other for the blessing of God to be upon all of us.
- c. In another place Genesis 2:18 God said, "It is not good for man to be alone!"
 - (1) God created us to need each other. I need you, and you need me.
 - (a) Whether we know it or not, it is not good for us to be alone.
 - (b) Go back and read the Scripture. He makes two points.1) it is not good for man to be alone and2) He will make a helper for Adam
 - (c) Whether you are married or not, it is not good for you to be alone!
 - (2) Why do you openly defy God and do what God said is not good? You need to get back in church!

Failure to attend church can be hazardous to your material and spiritual prosperity!

- d. Give me one good reason a child of God should not attend church?
- 6. God also says he wants us to be as one. How can you be as one with people if you don't come together to be one with them?
 - Jesus came to them because they were together that morning in church and when they left church they continued to talk about what happened in church.
 - (1) What happens when we are in the café?
 - (2) What happens when we are in the car going home?

 Mal 3:16 Then those who feared the Lord spoke
 with one another. The Lord paid attention and

heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name.

God gives attention to us when we give attention to His Church!

- 7. We should all attend church because Jesus prayed to the father for us to come together as one.

 Jn 17:20–23 (ESV) 20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.
- 8. If you do not make the effort to have a good relationship with your brothers and sisters in church you, **YOU** are a stumbling block to the prayer of Jesus being manifest.
 - a. Satan is using you to help more people go to hell!

Why would you expect God to answer your prayers when you won't do your part to answer His prayer?

Why should God turn his face toward you, when you turn your back toward him?

- b. Please carefully consider the seeds that you are sowing by not coming to church!
 - (1) In due time you will reap a harvest for your disrespect to your brothers and sisters.
 - (2) Jesus said that in that you do it to the least of these, you have done it to me.
- c. Tragically, many people of the world will not know Christ because you refuse to fellowship with other believers!
- 9. You may say you know too many problems and issues that people in the church have, but wherever you go there are going to be people that have problems and issues.
 - a. In fact, you are one who has problems and issues. Are any of us perfect?
 - b. Jesus never told you, you have an excuse for not assembling with other believers because you don't like them.

Your assembling with other believers is the trigger that causes Jesus to come into your presence!

- 10. What is your excuse for not being at church today? Is it worth breaking your relationship with Christ?
 - a. Is it worth missing a word from him when a word from him can mean a difference between life and death for you?
 - b. A word from God created trillions of stars and vast universes too numerous to count.
 - (1) Think of what one word from God can mean for your life.
- 11. Is your excuse for not coming to church worth losing the blessing God promises for those who come together to worship him?
 - a. He said he would be there, if only two are there.
 - b. He called the church his.
 - c. I will build My church. Are you helping to build it or ignorantly tearing it down with your mouth?

Be careful how you talk about Christ's Church. It is his bride! Even hell can't prevail against His Church! He will protect it!

- B. Be careful, God will kill you and send you to hell, for resisting the wellbeing of His Church
 - Eph 4:29–32 (NIV84) 29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
 - 1. Remember what happen to Miriam and Aaron just for complain about Moses wife.
 - 2. Watch yo mouth! Don't let your mouth get your butt in trouble with God!
 - 3. Let no slander be in your mouth against your brother or sister. God is listening.
- C. When you are with other believers having church, Jesus will approach you to talk with you privately. He will help you grow closer to him. We need others to help us do that!
 - 1 Jn 1:7 (NKJV) 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have <u>fellowship with one another</u>, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son <u>cleanses us from all sin.</u>
- D. If we have fellowship with one another there are numerous spiritual blessings promised to us. Healing is one of them.
- E. Jas 5:16 (ESV) 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

- 1. This happens at church.
- F. Think of how many times after his resurrection he showed himself to a gathering of believers.
 - 1. When he poured out the Holy Spirit, they were all in one place together having church.
 - 2. When he appeared to his disciples, they were all in one place together having church.
 - Thomas was not with them that evening when he appeared to all of the disciples. Thomas missed church and Thomas missed Christ.
 - 3. At the home of Cornelius, it was a gathering of believers where God poured out the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles.
 - 4. He wants to tell you his ways so that you may prosper. He will do that at church.
 - 5. He does not want you to suffer following ways that seem right to you.
 - a. He knows you do not understand his ways. So, he shares with those who will listen to him.

G. Pr 27:17 (ESV) — 17 Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.

- 1. When we fellowship with one another, the persons we have a problem with help us realize how much more we need to become like Christ.
- 2. Iron sharpens iron when believers come together and strengthen one another in the study of the word and prayer.

Failure to attend church can be hazardous to your material and spiritual prosperity!

H. God wants to talk to you but if you don't want to talk to your brother or sister, you are preventing him from blessing you and forgiving you for your own transgressions against him.

Attending church is not optional; it is mandatory!

- I. You must show yourself willing to talk to him by willing to talk to your brothers and sisters. You must be willing to love them as he loves them!

 1 Jn 4:20 (NIV84) 20 If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.
- J. There is a very terrible Scripture that follows Hebrews 10:25. It is called Hebrews 10:26
 - Heb 10:25 (NKJV) 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching...

Heb 10:26 (ESV) — 26 For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

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- K. Jesus died for his church. Why can't you his sacrifice some of your time for his people and strengthen yourself to love in spite of their faults or transgressions against you. Are we not commanded to forgive others so that we might be forgiven?
- L. If you want a closer walk with Jesus, you have got to walk like Jesus and fellowship with his disciples. This is his commandment!
- III. Lk 24:15 (ESV) 15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.
 - A. He not only came into their presence, he walked with them. This is also what we want.
 - 1. He walked with them and stayed with them until they reached their destination.
 - 2. As he walked with them he was protecting them. He was their Shepherd.
 - a. Don't be a dumb sheep!

If you choose to separate from the flock, why should he protect you?

If you want a closer walk with Jesus, you need to walk with other believers so Jesus can walk with you!

- B. Why did he walk with them? Because they were walking together in agreement discussing his name.
 - How can two walk together unless they agree. You must learn to become on one accord with the members of your church family!
 Ps 133:1 (ESV) 1 Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!
 Ps 133:3 (ESV) 3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.
- C. We need each other! Ec 4:9 (ESV) 9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.
- D. Working with other believers helps you grow closer to the Lord because he will come to you when you respect those he loves.
- IV. What does Jesus do next? He enters discussion with them.
 Lk 24:17 (ESV) 17 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.

==> (I may skip the following because of time and just read the scriptures)

- A. He starts communicating with them by asking them a question. This is the way of God to ask questions in order to teach us lessons.
- B. Remember, in the beginning after Adam and Eve had failed to listen to God what does he do?
 - 1. What question does he ask?
 - 2. **Ge 3:9 (ESV) "Where are you?"**
 - 3. Then what?
 - 4. **Ge 3:11 (ESV)** "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"
 - 5. Then what?
 - 6. **Ge 3:13 (ESV)** 13 Then to the woman, "What is this that you have done?"
- C. God ask us questions to get us to think and consider our ways. He wants us to think deeply. He wants to meditate on certain things.
- D. This is the same way Jesus taught; with questions that require thought.
 - 1. It is what Jesus did when he was 12 years old.
 - 2. Lk 2:46–49 (ESV) 46 After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress."
 - 3. 49 And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"
 - 4. What did the angels ask of the women at the tomb? Why are you looking for the living among the dead?
 - 5. Asking questions is the same way Jews study the word of God. They ask questions and ponder over the scripture to find deeper meaning than just reading.
- E. I will tell you, this is the same way I am teaching you as we study the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Questions and answers.
 - Again, I encourage you to study the Bible with me every Thursday night as we follow the series of questions designed to help all Christians be rooted and grounded in the word of God.
- V. Lk 24:18–19 (ESV) 18 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?"
- VI. 19 And he said to them, "What things?"
 - A. Here we see that Jesus, who knew better than them, merely wants conversation.
 - B. This is what God wants from you and me. He does not just want us to do all of the talking he wants to have meaningful conversation with us.

- VII. And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,
 - A. Then they tell him about how Jesus was crucified. And how they went to the tomb that morning and did not find his body and there were a lot of questions as to what was going on.
 - B. Then Jesus asked the next question.
- VIII. Lk 24:25 (ESV) 25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!
 - A. By referring to the prophets He is authorizing the Old Testament to give revelation to the new.
 - B. He is telling them they should have faith in the written word, the Bible.
 - C. He calls them foolish because although they believed in the word of God but they had not gotten a good understanding of the word of God.
 - 1. But in their fellowship together, Christ give them a better understanding.
 - 2. This is what we attempt to do on Wednesday nights. We allow you time to fellowship and share your understanding of the word.
 - D. It is extremely reckless and foolish to think that you can hear from God and not be knowledgeable of his word. God is his word! The more knowledgeable you are regarding the word of God the more confidence you can have in knowing that what you hear is truly of God.
 - E. Many people have suffered needlessly because they have presumed that God has spoken when it is really Satan speaking to them.
 - F. Many people run to human beings with the expectation they can tell them about God but the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet. Many have been misled by witty and good sounding words because they do not have a fundamental knowledge of the word of God.
 - 1. Another reason we are studying fundamentals on Thursday night.
 - G. But now, because they have come together in his name, he gives greater revelation to the things they have heard.
- IX. Lk 24:27 (ESV) 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

 A. Jesus tells them about the Scriptures because the scriptures tell of Jesus.
 - 1. You must do more than just read the scriptures, you must **study** them, you must **meditate** on them, so you come to know the person of Jesus.
 - You will grow in the word as you discuss the word with other believers.
 - a. This is the value of Wednesday night Bible study groups.
 - 3. He will reveal himself by the Holy Spirit, who will remind you of what you have heard.
 - B. You are to study to show yourself approved unto God so that when you do meet him you need not be ashamed for the foolish things you believed due to the lack of knowledge of his word.
 - C. You need to be part of a Bible teaching church. You need to fellowship with other believers that believe in the Bible.

- D. Signs and wonders in church are good, but signs and wonders do not necessarily mean the presence of God.
- E. Jesus teaches them and he said he would send them pastor teachers. He never said preachers.

There is a difference between a preacher and a teacher! Know the difference!

- 1. Satan masquerades as an Angel of God.
 - a. Remember the woman who prophesied about Paul who was actually being led by a demon?
- 2. There is no substitute for the word of God as written in the Bible.
- Find you a teacher of the word of God and fellowship with other believers under a teacher of the word of God.
- F. Remember,

John 14:23 (ESV): "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

- 1. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.
 - a. How can you keep a word you have not heard?
 - b. You must actively put yourself in a place to hear God's word. You must set aside a portion of your life and devote yourself to hearing the word.
- 2. Then, we will come to him and make our home with him.
 - a. What does he mean by the word, "we"?
 - (1) The word "we" means, he and the father will come and join with the Holy Spirit and be one with us.
- G. Jn 14:25 (ESV) 25 "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.
 - 1. Now which one of disciples was Christ speaking to when he said this?
 - 2. Is the, "you" plural or singular? Jesus was speaking to the gathering of the disciples after they had had communion with him.

X. Lk 24:28–29 (ESV) — 28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, =======⇒ Continue from here....

- A. God will often test us to see if we truly want a relationship with him by withdrawing himself. This is actually a question in disguise.
 - 1. He begins to walk away to see if they would ask him to stay.
 - 2. He wants them to seek him.
 - 3. He drew near to them and now he is testing them to see if they want to draw near to him.
- B. Remember Jacob? God test all of us. He wants to determine if we will seek him more than we seek comfort and material blessings of the world.

- XI. 29 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.
 - A. They asked, in agreement as one and what they ask for they received.
 - B. They invite him in, and they begin to have communion with him.
- XII. Lk 24:30–31 (ESV) 30 When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.
 - A. This is another reason you need to be in church. How can you have a common union by yourself? Who are you in union with?
 - B. Church is not all about you.
 - 1. Many people claim they are not being blessed in a church. Perhaps it is because they are not being a blessing.
 - 2. Many people have hardened their hearts towards church because of church hurt.
 - a. To love like Christ, means we have to love and fellowship with those who have caused us hurt.
 - b. Jn 13:34 (ESV) 34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
 - c. Jn 13:1 (NIV84) 1 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.
 - d. Communion was commanded! It is truly how love is shown to one another.
 Lk 22:19 (NIV84) 19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."
 - e. Jn 13:12–16 (NIV84) 12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.
 - f. Jn 13:17 (NIV84) 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Having communion with people who have faults, shows you are more like Christ, than those who refuse to have communion with people who have faults!

- a. How did Jesus love?
 - (1) Peter was at the communion table with Jesus and Jesus washed his feet knowing that he would deny him
 - (2) Judas was at the communion table with Jesus and Jesus washed his feet knowing that he would betray
 - (3) Stop making your excuses to attend church.
- B. Communion is a moment of intimacy. Sitting and dining together is God's way of being extremely personal with us.
 - 1. The table of communion is the table Representing union with God.
 - 2. Take eat, this is my body, Take drink, this is my blood.
- II. Lk 24:32 (ESV) 32 They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"
 - A. It is most important to realize is that Jesus came into the presence of those that were gathered in his name. And as they were gathered in his name, He gave greater revelation of his scriptures.
 - B. Then as they sat at the table, the table of communion, where all barriers of society were broken, He revealed himself.
 - C. What does this mean? Then when we are together, joined in his name, having church, he will give greater revelation to us than he does when we are alone. This is because God does not want us to be alone. It is not good that we are alone. This is all the more reason we must learn to get along.
- III. Lk 24:33–34 (ESV) 33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"
 - A. They understood the importance of fellowship.
 - B. Notice, they in the same hour, meaning immediately, got up and went back to church.
 - C. They did not keep what God had revealed to them to themselves, they went back to the gathering of believers and shared it with them what they had experienced.
- IV.
- V. The key to having a closer walk with Jesus is; learn to love one another as he has loved us. Then, he will make his home with us!
- VI. What I want you to see here, is that

- A. they experienced a closer walk with Jesus when they were walking in fellowship together.
- B. They experienced a better understanding of the word of God because when they were together Christ manifest himself to them in ways that he would not do if they were alone.
- C. God has clearly stated he did not make man to be alone.
 - 1. He created man in his image and likeness,
 - 2. He created man for fellowship not only with him but fellowship with other men.
 - 3. He created man in his image and likeness for men to learn to love their fellow man as he so loved and gave his life for mankind.
 - He promised a blessing of life evermore by providing a closer walk with him when we learn truly his church is to be all of us unified together in his name and there
 - b. he would provide for eternal blessings.
- VII. I have told you these things so that you may now clearly understand what the most important thing you need to do now is to learn to fellowship with other believers in church if you want a closer walk with Jesus.
- VIII. I mean with the church God has called you to.
- IX. A closer walk with Jesus is awaiting you. Failure to fellowship as he has told us will mean living a life inferior to the will of God for you.
- X. Today I have told you these things and now heaven and earth will be a witness against you if you fail to do as God has revealed it to you.
- XI.